



CURA Research Highlights 2008

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to Compare Alternatives in the Turcot Interchange

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Research Aims:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on the alternatives proposed to the Turcot Interchange reconstruction project.
- This assessment will be regional-based, analyzing the environmental impacts of these alternatives, and comparing them with policies, plans and programs within the region of Greater Montreal.
- This analysis will be based on an evaluation of these impacts and will concentrate on the following environmental sectors: Noise, Transportation, and Socio-Economic Conditions. (We have chosen to include the human component in our definition of the “physical environment”).
- The alternatives under consideration are: “Reconfiguration de l’Échangeur Turcot” proposed by M. Pierre Brisset, Architect for the Groupe de Recherche Urbaine (GRU) and the Turcot Interchange development proposed by the MTQ.
- When evaluating the alternative, we will attempt to use the results of the assessment to identify which is the most sustainable, which is most consistent with policy and plans, and which involves the least significant environmental damage.
- How will the alternative have effects on the noise sector which are likely to interact cumulatively with other regional plans? On socio-economic conditions?
- Which alternative conflicts with the objectives of the existing Transport Policy/Plan?
- What are the impacts of the forecasted traffic volumes from each alternative?
- What are the predicted effects of a major transportation project on the changes to health, economic standing and education possibilities?
- Are the predicted effects going to result in mitigation or improvement, and do they promote sustainability?

Key results to date:

- We have potential noise and traffic models, but are in the process of determining whether we will be able to use them for our project.
- We have located many policy documents from which to extract policy goals to compare between the proposed alternatives.
- At present, we have identified the main physical characteristics of the GRUHM alternative, as well as all the public transport initiatives associated with it, and all the projected traffic reductions.
- We have identified, to the best of our ability given the scarcity of available information, the same elements of the MTQ Scenario 4, which is the ministry’s “retained” scenario.
- We have produced a comprehensive analytical comparison between these two alternatives, incorporating evidence and data from case studies in other cities around the world. This comparison, however, while useful in isolating the characteristics of each alternative, is not a strategic assessment and does not specifically address the sectors we have chosen to study.

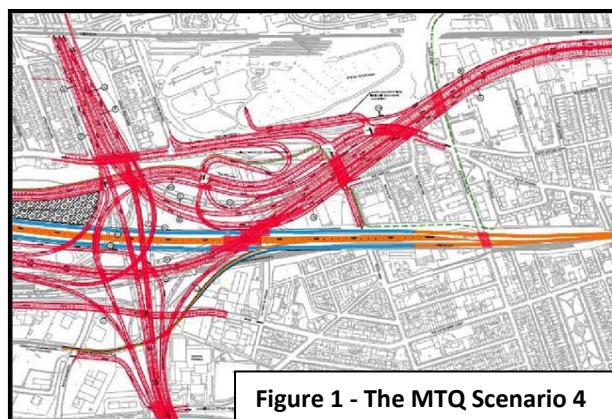


Figure 1 - The MTQ Scenario 4