

CITY CASE MONTREAL'S TRANSPORT COCKTAIL – AN INTEGRATED MOBILITY SYSTEM

“The future for mobility lies in the transportation cocktail that allows for the use of various modes during the same trip. It’s thus a blend of traditional and new, collective and individual methods of transportation.”

– Mr. Michel Labrecque, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Société de transport de Montréal

MONTREAL SHAKES THINGS UP WITH A TRANSPORTATION COCKTAIL

The Société de Transport de Montréal (STM), the authority responsible for managing Montréal's network of bus, metro, heavy rail, and paratransit services, is undertaking an experiment in integrated mobility. Within the Montréal region, the STM is working hard to integrate bus, bicycle, metro, taxi, shared taxibus, carpooling, and car sharing to promote a “smart combination of individual means of transportation”.

Through agreements and partnerships with a variety of alternative transportation service providers, ranging from the Bixi self-serve bicycle system to car sharing firms like Communauto, STM is creating a transportation cocktail to serve a wide array of mobility needs.¹³⁶ These partnerships are allowing STM to offer discounted, bundled transportation services, including preferential rates for car and bike-share partner services.¹³⁷ Payment is made easy through the full integration of fares across all modes of STM transit, allowing users to begin their trip walking, hop on a Bixi bike and cycle to the metro station and then ride three stops, all on the same ticket and transfer.

INTEGRATING THE BICYCLE INTO THE TRANSPORTATION MIX

In May of 2013, the STM unveiled a plan designed to enhance the use of bicycles within its jurisdiction. Central to this plan was the roll out of additional buses equipped with bike racks, the testing of bike slides in metro stations, a pilot program for dedicated bicycle parking spaces at metro stations, and a shared bus-bicycle lane on Viau Street – a major transit artery connecting bus and metro systems.¹³⁸ For Montréal, embracing the bicycle as a part of the public transportation mixture is a key ingredient that the STM has relied on as a healthy alternative to the car for whole or partial trips.

TAXIS

As a central part of its expanding integrated mobility program, the STM transformed their relationship with the taxi industry from a rival into a key partner. And rather than viewing the car as the ‘enemy’, the STM is harnessing the taxi industry's unrivaled dominance in the paratransit services market to deliver services in geographic gaps in the fixed-route transit network. Montréal's taxibus service was first developed by the STM in the mid-1990s. ‘Taxibuses’ are shared taxis operating both on a fixed-route and on-demand service. They now serve a vital function providing feeder services to commuter rail stations and other important entry points to the regional transportation network.

The integration of taxis and taxibuses into the transportation network allows STM to expand transit coverage into low-density areas so that fully 99.5% of the Montréal area is now covered by the network. As part of this integration, taxis may use dedicated bus lanes, further reducing trip times. It has also been cost-effective, with the cost of operating taxi service coming in at less than half that of conventional bus service.¹³⁹