

ALLÉGO, COMMUTE ALTERNATIVELY, A MONTRÉAL INITIATIVE  
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## Abstract

By acting simultaneously on demand and supply, the AMT is creating the conditions for success in triggering a change in the behaviour of users of transportation services in order to make them loyal to public transit. On one hand, our challenge is to make the supply of services efficient, effective and attractive by means of transportation projects. On the other, our challenge is also to facilitate access to these services and promote them through transportation demand management (TDM).

Since the year 2000, the AMT's TDM actions have focused on three areas:

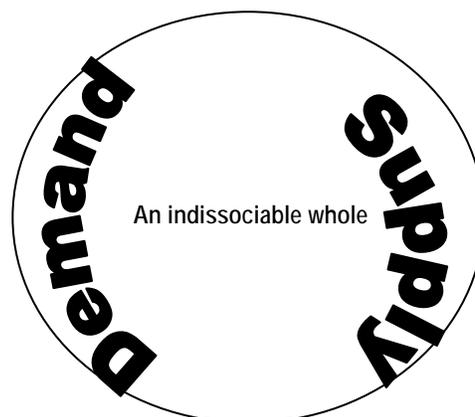
- intermodality, ensuring improved access to the regional public transit system;
- public transit loyalty programs that make it easier to buy monthly transit passes;
- the allégo approach, which facilitates the use of sustainable transportation to get to work or school.

allégo is the common signature uniting all of the AMT's TDM measures. The goal is to make TDM actions more coherent. In addition, we will be able to use this common signature as a marketing tool to promote these services. And in fact, allégo has acquired a higher profile among the major stakeholders in the Montréal metropolitan area.

# 1. TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT: AN AVENUE THAT SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED

The AMT concentrates most of its efforts on so-called "conventional" transportation projects. Such projects primarily aim to improve and develop public transit services in order to meet travel needs in the Montréal metropolitan area as appropriately as possible. In addition, since 2000, the AMT has been engaged in transportation demand management (TDM).<sup>1</sup> This new methodology uses incentives and marketing techniques to influence, and even reorient, transport users' behaviour. The aim is to make users loyal to public transit. More importantly, the environmental issues justify the need to persuade motorists, especially those who drive single-occupancy vehicles (SOVs), to change their ways and make use of effective, attractive and competitive alternatives (commuter train, metro, bus, carpool, bicycle, walking, telework). Acting simultaneously on both demand and supply constitutes the condition for success in bringing about such a change in behaviour. On one hand, our challenge is to make the supply of services efficient, effective and attractive by means of transportation projects. On the other, our challenge is also to facilitate access to these services and promote them through TDM.

FIGURE 1  
SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN TRANSPORTATION: AN INDISSOCIABLE WHOLE



<sup>1</sup> Also known as mobility management in Europe.

## 1.1. TOWARDS THE INCREASED ACCESSIBILITY OF THE REGIONAL SYSTEM THROUGH INTERMODALITY

One of the weak links in the travel chain is the link to the regional public transit system. Intermodality helps to ensure the increased accessibility of this system, especially from low-density districts, where it is difficult to organize efficient bus service. In this regard, different measures have been taken to facilitate the use of alternatives such as bicycles, taxis and carpooling.

- *Vélo-bus des Moulins*, a pilot experiment involving the installation of bicycle stands on buses, with the hope of making it permanent and extending it to the other transit authorities in the metropolitan area.
- *TAXI+BIKE*, a pilot experiment with bicycles in taxis, carried out in collaboration with Vélo-Québec.
- The installation of bicycle lockers in certain AMT facilities and the adjustment of the number of bicycle stands.
- The adjustment of the bicycle transportation capacity of the Deux-Montagnes and Dorion-Rigaud commuter train lines.
- The improvement of bicycle access to the AMT's equipment and the metro as well as of the interfaces between public transit and the system of bicycle paths.
- *allégo carpooling* in the park-and-ride lots is a pilot project initiated in the spring of 2005 with financial assistance from Transport Canada. This program makes carpooling easier between users' homes and 19 park-and-ride lots. It offers carpoolers the assurance that they will have a space reserved for carpools and a guaranteed return home by taxi in the event of an emergency that meant a passenger had to return home separately from the rest of the carpool. In December 2007, approximately 274 carpools with 455 members were making use of park-and-ride lots. The project was particularly attractive to people using park-and-ride lots that had reached the threshold of their maximum capacity. Each carpool frees up at least one parking space. In this way, the park-and-ride lots are accessible to more users with fewer vehicles and access to the regional public transit system is increased. The project's success justifies expanding carpooling to all the park-and-ride lots.

Most of these initiatives are inexpensive. They should be strengthened and integrated into the AMT's permanent operations.

## 1.2. USERS WHO ARE INCREASINGLY LOYAL TO PUBLIC TRANSIT

A range of loyalty programs are offered to public transit users. They make it easier to buy monthly passes and offer incentives that could stimulate greater use of public transit, and even a modal change on the part of people who now travel only by car.

- The *TRAM by mail*, launched in 2000, was the first loyalty program. It is managed by the AMT and enables subscribers to receive their monthly TRAM or TRAIN passes at home by mail. Payment is by credit card or direct debit. The subscription can be cancelled or interrupted for a while without penalty. In December 2007, there were 520 subscribers.
- *The annual public transit subscription* was launched in April 2007 by a partnership of the AMT, the RTL and the CIT de Sorel-Varennnes. Managed by the AMT, this program offers the same benefits as the *TRAM by mail*. However, subscribers commit to buy 11 consecutive monthly passes and then receive the 12th one free of charge. The AMT would like the RTL, the STM and the other CITs and OMITs to join in, making it possible to expand this program to all the monthly passes available in the region. Since the *annual subscription* was launched, there has been a gradual transfer of *TRAM by mail* subscribers to this program, and a significant increase in the number of annual subscriptions. In December 2007, there were 3,418 subscribers.
- *allégo annual access to public transit* was launched in November 2007 by a partnership of the AMT, the CIT association, the RTL, the STL and the STM. This program, which is also managed by the AMT, is specifically intended for employers and employees. Since the employees commit to buy 12 consecutive monthly passes, they benefit from a monthly discount of 8.33%, which corresponds to the 12th pass being free. Payment is by salary deduction and the employer distributes the monthly passes at the workplace. In January 2008, there was a total of 636 employee subscribers; 8 employers have signed on to the program.

- The *Car+Bus duo* was launched in 2005 by a partnership of the AMT, Communauto and the STL. This program, which is managed by Communauto, offers simultaneous subscriptions to the Communauto car sharing service and to public transit. Two options are available: a discount subscription to Communauto, without paying the membership fees of \$535, combined with an annual public transit subscription, or a public transit subscription with an 8.33% discount, combined with an annual Communauto subscription. The AMT would like the RTL, the STM and the CITs and OMITs to join in so that the program can be extended to all of the monthly transit passes available in the region. In April 2007, there were 58 subscribers. The client base most likely to sign up for this program is residents of the Island of Montréal.
- *Faites de l'air!* was launched in September 2003 by a partnership of the AMT, the CIT association, the Association québécoise de lutte à la pollution atmosphérique (AQLPA), the RTL, the STL and the STM. This program, which is managed by AQLPA, offers owners of old vehicles a chance to scrap them and receive a \$115 income tax credit from the Kidney Foundation of Canada. In addition, subscribers receive 3 to 6 monthly passes free of charge, which enables them to experience public transit and appreciate its benefits. Since 2003, more than 750 owners have joined the program. According to a survey conducted by AQLPA, 66% of them said they continued to use public transit at the end of the program. In 2008, the federal government will launch a national car scrapping program and *Faites de l'air!* can easily integrate into it.

The number of subscribers to loyalty programs is growing. These programs have not achieved their full potential since they are still unfamiliar to a majority of users and employers. As well, with the arrival of smart cards, which are expected to be launched in April 2008 and rolled out gradually after that, new fare products will be easier to develop. So we can anticipate that other loyalty programs will be created, targeting different groups of public transit users (schoolchildren, students, seniors, employees, regular users, occasional users).

### 1.3. COMMUTING ALTERNATIVELY WITH ALLÉGO

Since 2000, the AMT has managed the allégo approach with financial support from the Québec Transport Department. This initiative specifically targets workplaces and educational institutions with measures that encourage employees and students to commute in other ways than by SOV (bus, commuter train, metro, carpool, bicycle, walking, telework). A variety of projects have been carried out under this program, including the following:

- the implementation of an allégo program<sup>2</sup> in some 30 companies and institutions – they are now recognized as transport stakeholders since their decisions influence the transportation behaviour of their employees and students;
- the creation of 5 transportation management associations (TMAs)<sup>3</sup> with acknowledged expertise in TDM so that they can guide employers in their initiatives;
- the development by the AMT of a wide range of TDM products, commonly known as allégo products,<sup>4</sup> which make it easier for employers and TMAs to promote alternatives to SOVs.

The allégo approach facilitates carpooling in the Montréal metropolitan area. Experience has shown that workplaces and educational institutions are the best places to organize and promote carpooling, which is what an allégo program does. One of the incentives for carpooling will be to offer carpools the possibility of using high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes. With HOV lanes, which are relatively infrequent in the Montréal metropolitan area, carpooling becomes faster than travelling alone. This undeniable advantage, combined with those that would be offered at the workplace or educational institution by an allégo program, creates favourable conditions for carpooling. It should be noted that the AMT makes *allégo carpooling* available free of charge; it is an online service that helps to set up carpools both within and between companies. In December 2007, 87 workplaces and educational institutions had signed up for allégo carpooling, which made it possible to set up 322 carpools with 1,723 members. However, this tool is not yet very well known and it also needs to be updated technologically and improved in other ways so it will be more user-friendly and better adapted to users' needs. Thanks to the allégo approach, the AMT has developed expertise in carpooling.

<sup>2</sup> An allégo program contains a set of TDM measures enabling an employer to offer and promote viable alternatives to SOVs to its employees.

<sup>3</sup> A TMA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to mobilize employers, locally and in partnership with the various transportation actors, to develop and promote viable alternatives to SOVs by setting up allégo programs and providing allégo tools.

<sup>4</sup> allégo tools: the allégo Kit, the online survey on travel habits, the map indicating employees' places of residence, allégo carpooling, allégo annual access to public transit, self-serve bicycles, promotional tools, trial public transit passes, draws for public transit passes, allégo at school.

Because of its innovative TDM practices and the influence it exerts, the AMT has allowed the allégo approach to be integrated into four major interventions in the Montréal metropolitan area:

1. *Montréal's First Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development* provides for the implementation in the workplace of measures favouring sustainable transport by means of an allégo program;
2. the 2006 Annual Report on the Health of the Population, *Urban Transportation, a Question of Health*, published by the Public Health Department for the Island of Montréal plans to focus on allégo to reduce the use of SOVs;
3. the Québec Public Transit Policy, *Better Choices for Citizens*, plans to provide financial support for companies, institutions and TMAs that offer forms of transportation other than SOVs, on the basis of the example offered by allégo. This policy also provides for financial support for the AMT to ensure the maintenances and improvement of existing allégo tools and, if necessary, the creation of new ones.
4. the 2006–2012 Government action plan to promote healthy lifestyles and prevent weight-related problems, *Investing for the future*, plans to encourage workplaces to adopt a philosophy and measures favouring a physically active lifestyle (e.g., bicycle stands, showers, lockers, etc.) and consequently make people aware of the allégo program, which promotes an alternative way of commuting between home and work.

The financial assistance granted by the Québec government and the support of major partners ensure that the allégo approach will continue. Nevertheless, it has not yet achieved its full potential, since a clear majority of companies and institutions are not aware of it. There is still a lot to do if we are to get companies and institutions with more than 500 employees to join in, up from 335 in 2004, as well as all 35 colleges and universities in the Montréal metropolitan area.

## 2. ALLÉGO, THE COMMON SIGNATURE FOR TDM MEASURES

From now on, allégo will be the common signature for all of the AMT's TDM measures. This combination will ensure that actions are more coherent. As well, it means that this signature can be used as a marketing tool to raise the profile of these measures. Moreover, allégo has developed a reputation with many stakeholders in the Montréal metropolitan area, even though many users, companies and institutions are not familiar with it. Table 1 shows how TDM measures are structured throughout the travel chain in order to make alternative transportation accessible, integrated and attractive.

TABLE 1  
TDM MEASURES IN THE TRAVEL CHAIN

ORIGIN	MODAL TRANSFER	DESTINATION
<i>Bike-Bus</i>		<i>Bike-Bus</i>
<i>TAXI+BIKE</i>		<i>TAXI+BIKE</i>
<i>TRAM by mail</i>	Bicycle facilities in park-and-ride lots	<i>allégo annual access to public transit</i>
<i>Annual public transit subscription</i>	Bicycles in commuter trains	allégo program
<i>Car+Bus duo</i>	Interface between regional system and bike paths	<i>allégo carpooling</i>
<i>Faites de l'air!</i>	<i>allégo</i> carpooling in park-and-ride lots	

Some of them are designed primarily for the origin of users' trips. This is particularly true of the *TRAM by mail*, *annual subscription to public transit*, *Car+Bus duo* and *Faites de l'air!*, three public transit loyalty programs for which users register from their homes. On the other hand, since the *allégo approach*, *allégo annual access* and *allégo carpooling* are measures available at the workplace, employees access them through their employers, at their travel destination. Other measures such as *Bike-Bus* and *TAXI+BIKE* may be available at both the origin and destination of trips. Finally, a last class of measures becomes involved when a user transfers modes into the public transit system. These concern facilities for bicycles, carpooling to the park-and-ride lots, bicycles in commuter trains, and the interface between the regional system and the bike paths. Together, all of these TDM measures make alternative transportation more accessible, integrated and attractive.