

# Intention to use the REM by trip purpose

## The Issue

The first phase of the Montreal light rail transit network, the Réseau Express Métropolitain (REM), is expected to open before the end of 2023. Considering the cost and magnitude of the project, individuals' intentions to use the REM are essential considerations in the planning of the rapid transit network. Accommodating the REM to benefit low-income users is particularly important to address socio-economic inequalities in transport. A multi-wave bilingual survey was conducted between 2019 and 2022 in the Montreal's Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) to gain insight into residents' predicted travel behavior towards the REM. Based on this data, we examined the intentions to use the REM by trip purpose to understand the expected travel patterns of future users over time and along different income levels.

## Findings

### Intentions over time

- In all waves, respondents intended to use the REM mainly for leisure and airport trips.
- From 2019 to 2022, the number of individuals intending to use the REM to commute diminished, with the rise in telecommuting (13 percentage points decrease for work trips and a 6 percentage points decrease for school trips).
- Non-commuter travel increased between the waves (15 percentage points rise for leisure trips and a 3 percentage points rise for shopping trips).

### Intentions by income

- In 2022, low-income individuals (under \$60k per year) intended to use the REM more for discretionary travel than individuals with higher incomes (8 percentage points more for both shopping and leisure trips).
- Individuals with higher incomes intended to use the REM more for commuting and for airport trips (15 percentage points more for work trips and 10 percentage points more for airport trips).

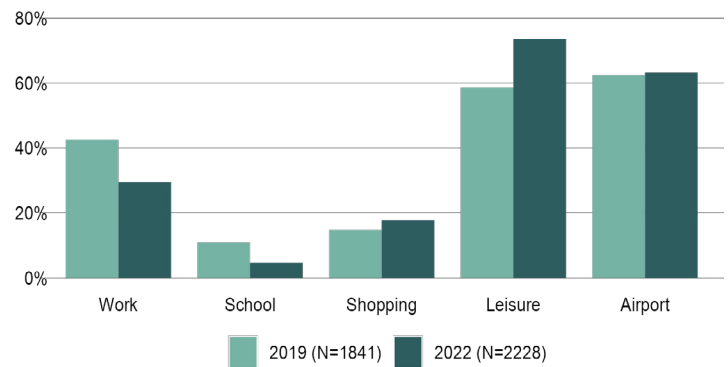


Figure 1: Intentions to use the REM by purpose over

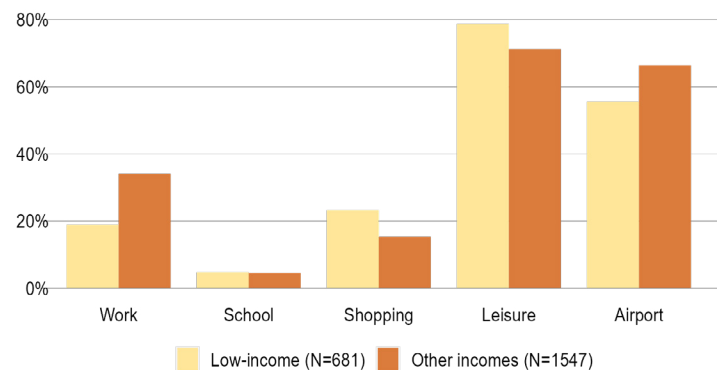


Figure 2: Intentions to use the REM by purpose and income in 2022

## Conclusion

- Intended trip purposes of the REM have changed since 2019, with a decrease in projected commuter travel and an increase in projected discretionary travel. Low-income individuals intended to use the REM more for discretionary trips compared to higher income individuals.

## Policy Recommendations

- » Provide a higher frequency of REM service during off-peak hours and the weekends to best accommodate future users, and especially low-income users.