



# FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS

## **Caution Regarding Forward-Looking Statements**

Bank of Montreal's public communications often include written or oral forward-looking statements. Statements of this type are included in this Annual Report, and may be included in other filings with Canadian securities regulators or the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, or in other communications. All such statements are made pursuant to the "safe harbor" provisions of, and are intended to be forward-looking statements under, the United States *Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995* and any applicable Canadian securities legislation. Forward-looking statements may include, but are not limited to, comments with respect to our objectives and priorities for 2008 and beyond, our strategies or future actions, our targets, expectations for our financial condition or share price, and the results of or outlook for our operations or for the Canadian and U.S. economies.

By their nature, forward-looking statements require us to make assumptions and are subject to inherent risks and uncertainties. There is significant risk that predictions, forecasts, conclusions or projections will not prove to be accurate, that our assumptions may not be correct and that actual results may differ materially from such predictions, forecasts, conclusions or projections. We caution readers of this Annual Report not to place undue reliance on our forward-looking statements as a number of factors could cause actual future results, conditions, actions or events to differ materially from the targets, expectations, estimates or intentions expressed in the forward-looking statements.

The future outcomes that relate to forward-looking statements may be influenced by many factors, including but not limited to: general economic and market conditions in the countries in which we operate; currency value fluctuations; changes in monetary policy; the degree of competition in the geographic and business and market areas in which we operate; changes in laws; judicial or regulatory proceedings; the accuracy and completeness of the information we obtain with respect to our customers and counterparties; our ability to execute our strategic plans and to complete and integrate acquisitions; critical accounting estimates; operational and infrastructure risks; general political conditions; global capital markets activity; the possible effects on our business of war or terrorist activities; disease or illness that affects local, national or international economies; disruptions to public infrastructure, such as transportation, communications, power or water supply; and technological changes.

We caution that the foregoing list is not exhaustive of all possible factors. Other factors could adversely affect our results. For more information, please see the discussion below concerning the effect certain key factors could have on actual results. When relying on forward-looking statements to make decisions with respect to Bank of Montreal, investors and others should carefully consider these factors, as well as other uncertainties and potential events, and the inherent uncertainty of forward-looking statements. Bank of Montreal does not undertake to update any forward-looking statements, whether written or oral, that may be made from time to time by the organization or on its behalf.

Assumptions about the performance of the Canadian and U.S. economies in 2008 and how that will affect our businesses are material factors we consider when setting our strategic priorities and objectives, and in determining our financial targets, including provision for credit losses. Key assumptions include that the Canadian economy will expand at a moderate pace in 2008 while the U.S. economy expands modestly, and that inflation will remain low in North America. We also have assumed that interest rates in 2008 will decline slightly in Canada and the United States, and that the Canadian dollar will likely be at parity with the U.S. dollar at the end of fiscal 2008. In determining our expectations for economic growth, both broadly and in the financial services sector, we primarily consider historical economic data provided by the Canadian and U.S. governments and their agencies. Assumptions about the terms of any agreement we enter to transfer our liability for future customer redemptions, or to change the cost structure, relating to our customer credit card loyalty rewards program are material factors we considered in assessing expected changes in the run-rate costs of the program. Tax laws in the countries in which we operate, primarily Canada and the United States, are material factors we consider when determining the sustainable effective tax rate.