



The Mayor of Gaspé was able to exchange a few words with Premier François Legault on September 27 in Gaspé.

Photo: N. Sergerie

## Premier Legault does not commit to a return date for Gaspé train

*Nelson Sergerie, LJI*

GASPÉ - The mayor of Gaspé is not taking offense at the fact that outgoing Premier François Legault isn't promising a return date for the train to Gaspé.

During a quick stop on September 27, in Gaspé, the head of the CAQ indicated that a labour issue meant that he could not decide on a timetable for Gaspé.

Daniel Côté agrees with the premier on the lack of resources to accelerate the pace.

"The political commitment is still the same. They want to settle the file, but we agree that there is an explosion of costs that must be quantified. The real issue, I do not think it is money or political commitment. The sinews of war is the lack of railway engineers in Quebec and there is an even greater shortage in the Ministry of Transport. If we are able to have more railway engineers, the file will move much more quickly," says the mayor.

In the current situation, a cost of \$500 million for rail rehabilitation could become realistic. "If we look at the last number that came through our hands it was just over \$200 million. We have seen the increase in construction costs by 30 to 40% in recent years. It is perhaps realistic that we have reached that point. The longer we wait, the worse it gets. The more it deteriorates, the more it costs and construction costs will not decrease as much. It's possible that it will end at \$400 million or \$500 million. I am not a specialist, but it is possible," admits Mr. Côté.