



Representatives Blouin and Sainte-Croix's record marked by the postponement of rail repairs

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GASPÉ – The results of the 2025 winter session of the Bonaventure and Gaspé Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) were marked by the postponement of the rehabilitation of section three of the regional railway and the indefinite postponement of the completion of the Gaspé terminus.

“We decided to return section 3 to the planning stage. We figured we would take the year to optimize the work to be done. Can we break down certain segments because the economic context is difficult and when we have a cost overrun of \$150 million or \$200 million, we have to take a step back,” said MNA Catherine Blouin.

“This is a particularly complex issue in terms of budget and implementation. It's a major challenge for the future, and we're working to review the implementation strategy,” added Gaspé MNA Stéphane Sainte-Croix.

In June 2023, the Quebec government had allocated a total of \$872 million for the repair of the entire rail line between Matapédia and Gaspé.

However, in May 2025,



Photo: N. Sergerie

Representatives Blouin and Sainte-Croix during the announcement of road investments in May in Gaspé.

Quebec withdrew \$561 million for the rehabilitation of the Gaspé rail line from its investment plan for 2025-2027.

From \$680 million for 2024-2026, the planned expenditure is now only \$119 million for the next two years.

In the meantime, committees have been set up to evaluate the possibility of building structures that would support less weight or reduce rail traffic speed.

“We are taking a year to

carry out the exercise and limit costs,” said Ms. Blouin.

“We want to ensure that the work is done flawlessly to guarantee the quality of the infrastructure and minimize asset maintenance costs. We're not giving up,” said Mr. Sainte-Croix.

Neither MNA is willing to suggest a date for when a train might arrive in Port-Daniel-Gascons.

According to Éric Dubé, president of the Société du

chemin de fer de la Gaspésie, a bridge still needs to be completed near Caplan.

In Port-Daniel-Gascons, Éric Dubé mentions that the tunnel is ready but that plans have not yet been made for the two approaches, mainly due to the strike by Quebec government engineers.

“There is still work to be done due to deficiencies found during the final evaluation of the section. There is also the strike by Quebec government engineers. Here too, we are waiting for details on the evaluation work and the corrections to be made. But I am confident about the future,” comments Stéphane Sainte-Croix.

Asked for a timeline, he responded, “Are we talking weeks or months? I am not in a position to answer that question,” added the MNA.

“Section two will be open as soon as possible, and everything is being done to reach that goal,” said Ms. Blouin.

This new uncertainty does not sit well with Gaspé Mayor Daniel Côté.

“This is all a bit ridiculous. The premier promised us a timeline. It's normal for timelines to undergo minor adjustments. But right now, there is no timeline for Port-Daniel-Gascons. Imagine the timeline

for Gaspé? We have no idea,” said Daniel Côté.

“Why is everyone skeptical? It's because we no longer have a timeline and no one can give us one. The ultimate goal is to rebuild the entire rail line to Gaspé,” added Mr. Côté.

He pointed out that the Gaspé Peninsula has missed several opportunities for economic development.

“I feel like I've been repeating the same thing for 10 years. I've been elected for almost 12 years, and we've been fighting for almost 12 years. It's been one promise after another from different governments. Every time, they make promises, and every time, nothing comes of it. There are many issues at stake, but I'm eager to get to the bottom of this once and for all,” he says.

The mayor agrees with having a rail line with reduced load capacity that would still allow Via Rail and freight trains to operate.

“That's all we need. Initially, engineers in the region said that the work required to make it work would cost a little over \$100 million. But when we put it through the government process, we wanted the Cadillac, and that's when we spent beyond our needs,” Mr. Côté concluded.