



Jonatan Julien's comments on the rail project: Daniel Côté not surprised

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GASPÉ – The mayor of Gaspé says he is not surprised by Quebec Transport Minister Jonatan Julien questioning the feasibility of completing the regional railroad's section 3, between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé.

On February 25, the minister stated in the National Assembly that he had travelled to Gaspé to meet with various stakeholders.

He mentioned that the final section had a business plan closely linked to LM Wind Power with wind turbines. Since the blades are shipped using vessels, he questioned the relevance of repairing the third section between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé.

"I don't know what it takes



Photo: Nelson Sergerie

Work is underway on section 3, particularly on the Grande-Rivière bridge. Not completing the repairs would be a waste of money, according to Gaspé mayor, Daniel Côté.

to reassure him. The minister keeps saying that LM ships its blades with vessels. No Wonder! There's no train. LM needs the train to ship its blades to Texas. Right now, it's

expensive transportation logistics that make the company less competitive. How many times do we have to say it? Repeat it? Demonstrate it? I have the impression we're talking to

people who are turning a deaf ear," says Daniel Côté.

The mayor agrees that when LM Wind Power was producing 107-metre blades, they could not be transported by rail, but the plant is now manufacturing smaller blades that could travel by train.

"It's a chicken-and-egg situation, the train from Gaspé! (There is) no need to travel a long distance with a police escort that costs an exorbitant amount just to catch the train a little further away. Beyond that, there are other industrial projects on hold because the train isn't there. These are private developers who aren't committed. I can't tell you how many development opportunities we're losing because we don't have the train. There's also the passenger train that

people are demanding," argues the mayor.

Daniel Côté pointed out that work is currently underway on section three between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé.

"The most visible work is on the Grande Rivière (bridge) in Grande-Rivière and Douglastown. Tens of millions of dollars are being invested between Port-Daniel and Gaspé. If you drive along Route 132, you'll see plenty of excavators and cranes. Are they putting tens of millions of dollars into the water only to throw it away? If so, they are very, very bad managers. I'm starting to get seriously tired of hearing these questions," the elected official says, recalling premier François Legault's promise to rehabilitate the railway to Gaspé.

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