

Budget 2019-2020

Under Construction: Numerous Projects Quebecers Have Been Waiting for Finally Get Off the Ground

Québec, March 21, 2019. – Québec's economic growth hinges on the growth of all of its regions, especially by banking on their diversity and resources and the vitality of their communities. However, the concerns of the people living in the various regions have not been sufficiently heard in recent years. The new Québec government intends to give the green light to several anticipated projects all over Québec.

Ensuring high-speed Internet connection and a broadband cellular network in all regions

Access to modern infrastructure is crucial to leveraging the full potential of Québec's regions. To that end, the government will invest \$400 million over the next seven years to ensure that businesses and households in the rural areas and remote regions of Québec have access to high-speed Internet connection and a broadband cellular network. This new program will accelerate economic development in the regions, improve quality of life in the different communities and encourage families to move to and stay in the regions.

Increasing investment in the agriculture and agri-food sector

To provide additional financial leverage in order to increase investment in the agriculture and agri-food sector, Budget 2019-2020 provides \$250 million in funding over five years, which will make it possible to, among other things, enhance certain investment programs of La Financière agricole du Québec and the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation.

Supporting Aboriginal communities

Québec's Aboriginal communities face numerous economic and social challenges. The government pledged to do more to support them, and Budget 2019-2020 provides additional investments totalling more than \$130 million, particularly for the purpose of enhancing the Aboriginal Initiatives Fund and reducing the cost of living in Nunavik.

Additional support for municipalities

The government is also announcing additional support for municipalities to help them play their full role in providing quality services to citizens living in all regions of Québec. Investments totalling nearly \$243 million over five years will make it possible to, among other things, add community, cultural and recreational infrastructure and provide additional assistance for services provided by the Sûreté du Québec.

In addition, to meet the particular needs of certain regions, Budget 2019-2020 includes upward of \$90 million in investments over the next five years to carry out structuring projects such as extension of the natural gas distribution network, implementation of transport logistics to supply liquefied natural gas to the Côte-Nord region, support for the QcRail project and construction of multi-user infrastructure in northern regions.

Furthermore, the new Québec government is moving forward with anticipated infrastructure projects in various regions, under the 2019-2029 Québec Infrastructure Plan (QIP).

For example, the government confirms that the project to establish a new road link between Québec and Lévis is progressing smoothly and will soon move to the planning stage. The amount of \$325 million has been set aside under the 2019-2029 QIP for studies, plans and specifications. The project to build a by-pass track in Lac-Mégantic has also reached the planning stage.

The project to repair the slab of the Laviolette bridge has moved from the study to the planning stage. The project aims to improve the condition and maximize the life of the bridge while improving traffic flow and safety. This bridge links the Mauricie region with Centre-du-Québec.

In Lévis, the project to widen Autoroute 20 is being planned. The project consists in adding a third lane in both directions in order to improve traffic flow and safety in the approaches to the Pierre-Laporte and Québec bridges.

Many anticipated infrastructure projects are classed “Under study” for the first time. This is the case for the project to provide new hospital services in Outaouais, the project to build a new hospital in Chisasibi, expansion of the Dow complex at the École de technologie supérieure, the establishment of a metropolitan network of dedicated lanes on several highways, and the development of structuring public transit systems in Montréal East and Longueuil.

Quotation:

“We are listening to the concerns of Quebecers from all the regions and we are implementing measures and projects that they have been waiting to see. We have the necessary leeway to invest more in our infrastructure throughout Québec because our debt reduction objectives will be achieved sooner than expected.”

Eric Girard, Québec Minister of Finance

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Full details of Budget 2019-2020:

http://www.budget.finances.gouv.qc.ca/budget/2019-2020/index_en.asp

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