

ADVANTAGE

ST. LAWRENCE

QUÉBEC'S NEW MARITIME VISION



This publication was prepared by the Direction générale du transport maritime, aérien et ferroviaire and edited by the Direction générale des communications of the ministère des Transports.

The contents of this publication can be found on the Ministère's website:

www.transports.gouv.qc.ca.

Cette publication est également disponible en français sous le titre *Avantage Saint-Laurent – La nouvelle vision maritime du Québec*.

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© Gouvernement du Québec, ministère des Transports, June 2021

ISBN 978-2-550-89544-2 (PDF)

Legal deposit — 2021

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

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MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

The St. Lawrence: A Course Toward Sustainable Prosperity

It is with great pride that I present Québec's new maritime vision:

ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE.



Our history and identity are built around this majestic St. Lawrence river. Not only is it a strategic waterway, but it is also the anchoring point for many Québec cities and towns. It is the gateway to North America. As a path to the future and an inexhaustible source of beauty and wealth, the river can now lead Québec society toward greater and sustainable prosperity.

With this new maritime vision, we will make the St. Lawrence a powerful economic driver while respecting its ecosystems and shoreline communities. We aspire to bring forth new generations of entrepreneurs and researchers in the St. Lawrence Valley. We must promote our assets to attract investors looking to be a part of a sustainable maritime economy.

ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE is a bold and innovative vision. It provides a new lever to continue building our wealth and history around the St. Lawrence.

François Legault
Premier of Québec

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

We are proud and excited to unveil **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE!** We met with shoreline communities and stakeholders throughout Québec to discuss, plan, and create this new maritime vision.

ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE is a reflection of who we are and what we want to become as a society thanks to the economic, social, and environmental potential of our maritime territory.



In this new vision, the Government of Québec sees the St. Lawrence River as not just a waterway, but as a course toward prosperity and sustainable growth. As such, it is working hard to provide Québec with modern and competitive infrastructure. It is expanding scientific research and maritime expertise. It is protecting ecosystems and biodiversity. It is creating development opportunities and engaging shoreline communities.

In a nutshell, **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** offers Québec an overarching, responsible vision for how the St. Lawrence River can benefit current and future generations.

Chantal Rouleau
Minister for Transport and Minister Responsible for the Metropolis
and the Montréal Region

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ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE

A VISION FOR QUÉBEC'S FUTURE

The Québec government is committed to making the St. Lawrence a powerful driver of economic, social, and environmental development.

Québec was born of the St. Lawrence, and our future also depends in part on this exceptional watercourse. With **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the government plans to harness the power of the river and unleash its potential to increase Quebecers' collective wealth and chart a new course toward prosperity and growth. However, more can still be done to harness the potential for economic and social development inherent in the St. Lawrence's strategic geographic location.

Our goal is to make the St. Lawrence a thriving economic corridor while respecting affected ecosystems and the interests of maritime communities.

THREE PRIORITIES

Québec's new maritime vision is focused on three priorities:

- Provide modern, competitive port facilities along the St. Lawrence
- Ensure efficient navigation that respects ecosystems along the St. Lawrence
- Provide promising and sustainable development opportunities for communities along the St. Lawrence

**A POWERFUL DRIVER
OF ECONOMIC, SOCIAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL
DEVELOPMENT**

AN ENVIABLE GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION

The St. Lawrence River enjoys an enviable geographic position and is a corridor of critical importance to Québec's economy.

It is home to a network of commercial ports that transport people and freight over a large portion Québec, and is also a key point of entry and departure for international trade. The St. Lawrence is a leading gateway to North America that provides rapid access to the Great Lakes region. In the opposite direction, the St. Lawrence gives the Québec economy an operational, accessible route for exporting its companies' products.

With its network of locks and canals, Québec's section of the river comprises an important part of the St. Lawrence Seaway, a navigation system we share with Ontario and eight U.S. states.

Downstream sections of the St. Lawrence are even wider and more readily navigable.

The entire maritime system based around the St. Lawrence River serves a regional economic market of more than 100 million consumers in the heart of North America.

Thanks to the St. Lawrence River, Québec as a whole, as well as its individual regions, are blessed with an outstanding geographic location which is, for now, not being exploited to its full potential.

TOTAL BUDGET: \$926.9 MILLION

A total budget of \$926.9 million, provided by the Québec government and partners, will fund implementation of the strategy's three priorities over the 2020–2021 to 2024–2025 fiscal years.

More specifically, \$300 million has been earmarked in the 2021–2031 Québec Infrastructure Plan to finance investments identified under **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** with a view to creating modern and competitive port infrastructures along the St. Lawrence.

An additional \$451.9 million will be invested to facilitate efficient, ecosystem-friendly navigation on the St. Lawrence and provide promising and sustainable development opportunities for communities along the St. Lawrence. These actions represent a mix of equity investments and loans to businesses.

The overall fiscal impact associated with these actions is \$172 million between 2020–2021 and 2024–2025, as announced in the 2020–2021 budget.

TABLE 1

Advantage St. Lawrence 2020–2025 financial framework

(in millions of dollars) — Amounts initially allocated in the Québec government's 2020–2021 budget

PRIORITY	PLANNED ACTION	FINANCIAL IMPACT
Provide modern and competitive port facilities along the St. Lawrence	300.0	49.3
Ensure efficient navigation that respects ecosystems along the St. Lawrence	57.6	57.6
Provide promising and sustainable development opportunities for communities along the St. Lawrence.	394.3	65.1
Subtotal - Québec government	751.9	172.0
Contribution of private and public partners - Smart economic corridor	175.0	–
Total - Québec government and partners	926.9	–

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT'S REGIONAL TOUR AND INDIGENOUS CONSULTATION

The regional tour

From July 2 to September 23, 2019, the Minister for Transport toured the 11 Québec regions that border the St. Lawrence.

Meetings were held in Trois-Rivières, Québec City, Bécancour, Rivière-du-Loup, Rimouski, Matane, Sept-Îles, Port-Cartier, Baie-Comeau, Saguenay, Gaspé, Salaberry-de-Valleyfield (Sainte-Catherine), Montréal, and Sorel.

At these meetings, the Minister led round tables with representatives of public bodies and institutions, development organizations, tourism associations and companies, private companies from the maritime sector and other industries, environmental groups, and Indigenous communities.

Many of the thoughts, suggestions, and needs expressed at these roundtables were directly considered in the development of [ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE](#).

Sectoral consultations

The Minister for Transport's regional tour was complemented by a public call for briefs along with sectoral consultations conducted by the ministry's Direction du secrétariat à la stratégie maritime from October 8 to November 8, 2019.

Indigenous consultation

Direction du secrétariat à la stratégie maritime consulted with 18 Indigenous communities in the territory covered by [ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE](#).

This consultation, which preceded the sectoral consultations, gave Indigenous communities the opportunity to share their priorities early in the process.

The Indigenous consultation permitted the Direction to obtain information on the needs and issues of multiple communities and to recognize the importance of developing permanent lines of communication with Indigenous communities that have a stake in Québec's new maritime vision.

Throughout the implementation of [ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE](#), the Québec government is committed to maintaining ongoing dialogue with Indigenous communities.

ILLUSTRATION 1

Advantage St. Lawrence Area



Avantage St. Lawrence Area
(source: Direction générale du transport maritime, aérien et ferroviaire)

- Railway
- Shipping route
- Road
- Border

Transports Québec

Ministère des Transports, Direction de la géomatique 2021-05-20
 Note: This map is for illustration purposes, and has no legal value.
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The area of **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** includes the St. Lawrence River, the Saguenay, as well as the estuary, the gulf and the shoreline of the St. Lawrence. Note that Québec's total maritime territory is much larger.



**\$300 MILLION IN THE QUÉBEC
2021-2031 INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN**

An aerial photograph of a port facility, showing a large area filled with colorful shipping containers (red, blue, yellow, green) stacked in rows. Several trucks are visible on the roads and near the containers. In the background, there are industrial buildings and a large red-roofed structure. The image is slightly faded and serves as a background for the text.

PART ONE

PROVIDE MODERN, COMPETITIVE PORT FACILITIES ALONG THE ST. LAWRENCE

The Québec government has earmarked \$300 million in the 2021-2031 Québec Infrastructure Plan to fund this goal.

It plans to make the St. Lawrence one of the most efficient economic corridors in North America by upgrading docking facilities, modernizing ports, and enhancing transport links between port facilities and transportation networks.

Investments will be made in the following areas:

- Establish the Montréal Port Authority's new Contrecoeur container terminal
- Invest in maritime infrastructure projects that stimulate economic recovery and the development of maritime transportation markets along the St. Lawrence
- Implement a new investment program for maritime infrastructure and equipment

This investment will be made within an overarching vision of harnessing the potential of the St. Lawrence, while promoting the synergy and complementarity of high-potential shipping markets to benefit both international and short-sea shipping.

TABLE 2

Provide modern, competitive port facilities along the St. Lawrence 2021–2025 financial framework

(in millions of dollars) — Amounts initially allocated in the Québec government's 2020–2021 budget

MEASURE	PLANNED ACTION	FINANCIAL IMPACT
Establish the Contrecœur container terminal	55.0	–
Support maritime infrastructure projects that develop markets and stimulate economic recovery	145.0	40.0
Implement a new maritime infrastructure investment program	100.0	9.3
Subtotal – Québec government	300.0	49.3

ESTABLISH THE CONTRECŒUR CONTAINER TERMINAL

Investments in port infrastructure modernization will initially focus on establishing the Contrecœur container terminal. Phase 1 of this project will provide a solution that enables the Port of Montréal to respond to current market growth while maintaining its regular services.

\$55 MILLION CONTRIBUTION TO A PROJECT ESTIMATED AT \$750 TO \$950 MILLION

Under **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, \$55 million has been allotted to help fund the project.

The total cost of the Contrecœur project is estimated at \$750 to \$950 million. According to the Montréal Port Authority, the project will create 5,000 jobs during construction, and 1,000 jobs afterwards.

SUSTAINED GROWTH FOR THE PORT OF MONTRÉAL

The efficiency of the Port of Montréal's intermodal network for the container market is internationally recognized. The port's docks have direct rail links extending throughout North America, and the new Contrecœur terminal will be connected to Greater Montréal's road and railway networks.

On March 1, 2021, following an environmental analysis conducted by the Canadian Impact Assessment Agency, Environment and Climate Change Canada found that, when mitigation measures are factored in, the project was not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects. The Government of Canada has invited the Montréal Port Authority to continue the process of contacting other provincial and federal government agencies to obtain all necessary permissions.

SUPPORT MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO PROMOTE MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The Québec government believes that a coordinated development of terminals along the river is essential to the short- and medium-term growth of international freight transportation on the St. Lawrence. Such development will make it possible to capitalize on the synergy and complementarity of the projects underway to make the St. Lawrence a top-flight global destination.

The government will focus its actions on maritime infrastructure projects in order to boost economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and develop high potential markets.

BUDGET: \$145 MILLION

Under **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the Québec government is earmarking \$145 million for projects that will contribute to rapid economic recovery and significantly impact local workforces, alongside projects designed to develop high-potential markets.

These include projects to build, renovate, or upgrade maritime transport infrastructure for people and freight, as well as projects related to intermodal infrastructures serving our port terminals.

ESTIMATED TOTAL INVESTMENT: \$400 MILLION

These projects will contribute to economic recovery and market development through an estimated total investment of \$400 million in the short term.

In many of Québec's maritime regions, government funding will catalyze developers. The investments made will improve Québec's strategic port network, and in turn the competitive position of the St. Lawrence River for maritime traffic.

PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Synergy and complementarity of the strategic port network
- Long-term positive economic impacts
- Development of new markets for maritime transport of people and freight
- Development of short-sea shipping
- Positive impact on gross domestic product (GDP), e.g., generating an inflow of foreign capital, an increase in the value of exports, or an increase in the consumption of Québec products and services
- Near total completion within 18 months of project launch, for economic stimulus projects

SHORT TIMELINE FOR ECONOMIC STIMULUS PROJECTS

Since spring 2020, the Québec government has been approaching ports within the strategic network to identify projects eligible for economic stimulus. The goal is to announce successful projects throughout 2021.

Currently identified projects include the ports of Québec, Montréal, Matane, and Trois-Rivières. Other projects are designed to promote short-sea shipping on the St. Lawrence.

QUÉBEC'S STRATEGIC PORT NETWORK

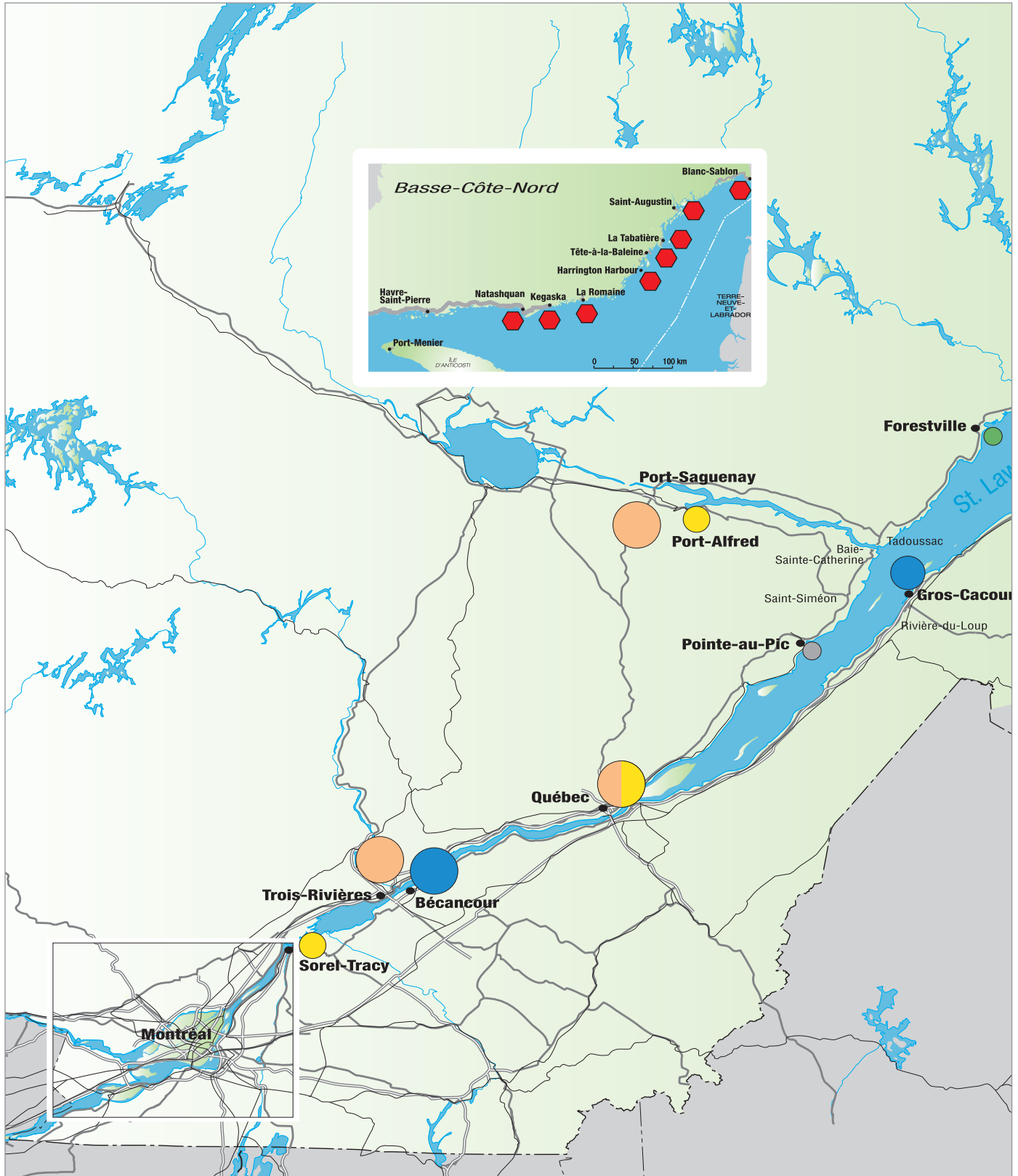
Québec's strategic commercial port network comprises some 20 ports along the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the St. Lawrence River.

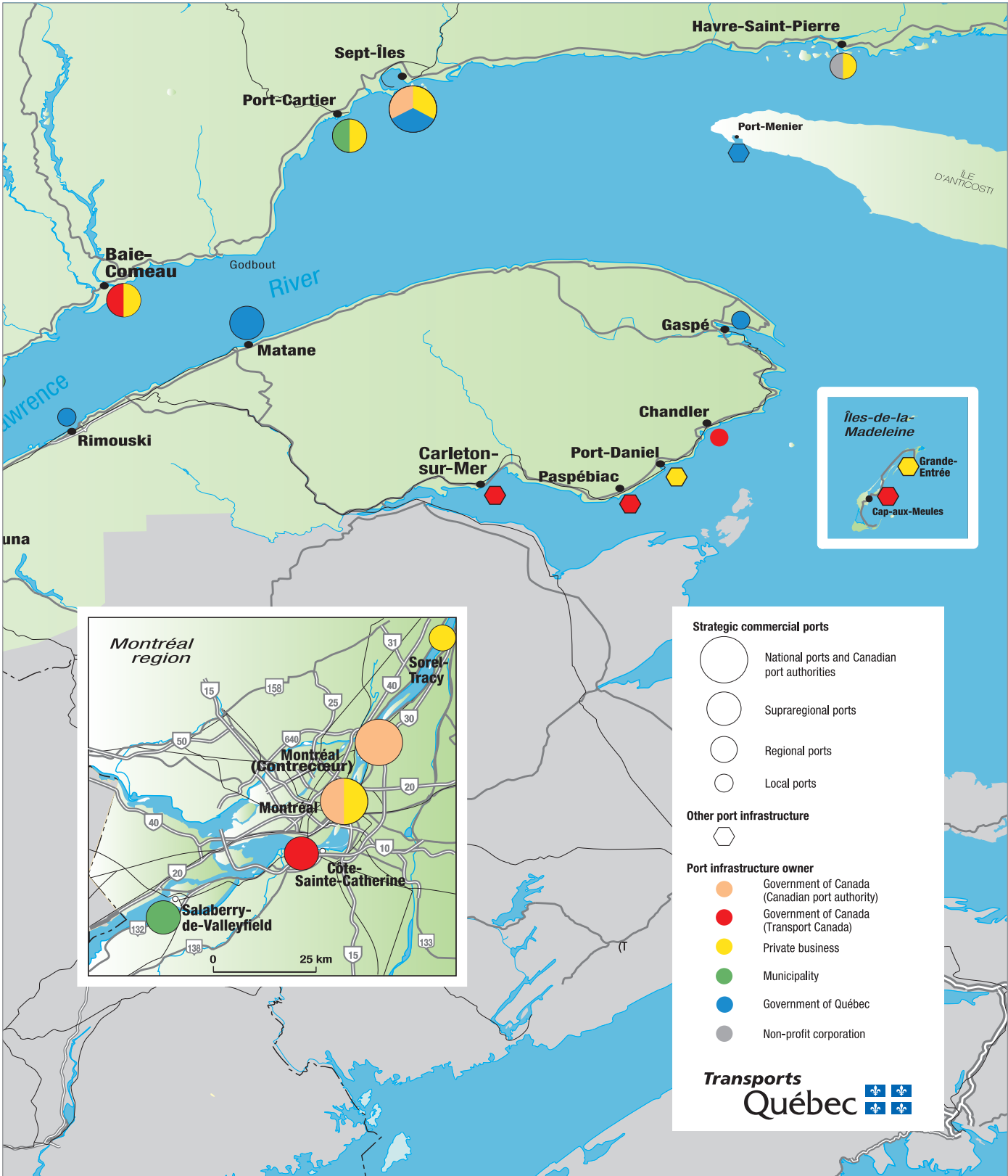
Québec's strategic port network includes:

- The five federally regulated port authorities: Montréal, Trois-Rivières, Québec City, Saguenay, and Sept-Îles
- The port of Bécancour, operating under the Société du parc industriel et portuaire de Bécancour
- The ports of Gros-Cacouna, Rimouski, Matane, and Gaspé, operating under the authority of the Société portuaire du Bas-Saint-Laurent et de la Gaspésie
- Municipal and private ports and wharves, such as Forestville, Havre-Saint-Pierre, Pointe-au-Pic, Port-Alfred, Port-Cartier, Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Sorel-Tracy, and the private portion of the Port of Sept-Îles (Rio Tinto wharf), and the Port of Baie-Comeau.

ILLUSTRATION 2

Québec's strategic port network





IMPLEMENT A NEW MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAM

To support investment in maritime infrastructure, the government is introducing the new Maritime Infrastructure Investment Program to fund both maritime facilities and equipment and short-sea shipping initiatives.

A \$100 MILLION PROGRAM

The Maritime Infrastructure Investment Program is broader in scope than the economic stimulus budget.

This \$100 million program is designed to financially support investments in facilities and equipment for the maritime transport of people and freight while promoting multimodal transport links.

The program may also fund facilities and equipment related to ferry services that are not part of the Société des traversiers du Québec (STQ) network, or work related to maintaining these services or adding new essential services.

A PROGRAM OPEN TO SHORT-SEA SHIPPING

The new maritime infrastructure program will also be open to investments in short-sea shipping.

Short-sea shipping refers to domestic or international freight transport along coastlines and inland waterways that does not cross an ocean.

Maritime transport comes with multiple economic, social, and environmental benefits over road transport. With **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the Québec government seeks to recognize these benefits and facilitate the modal shift from road to maritime transport for certain uses.

The development of short-sea shipping will contribute to meeting the Québec government's greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

PART TWO

ENSURE EFFICIENT NAVIGATION THAT RESPECTS ECOSYSTEMS ALONG THE ST. LAWRENCE

Under **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, \$232.6 million will be allocated to facilitate efficient navigation that respects the ecosystems along the St. Lawrence.

Nearly \$200 million will be allocated to establish a smart economic corridor, and investments will be made in maritime risk management and ecosystem protection.

TABLE 3

Ensure efficient navigation that respects ecosystems along the St. Lawrence 2021–2025 financial framework

(in millions of dollars) — Amounts initially allocated in the Québec government's 2020–2021 budget

MEASURE	PLANNED ACTION	FINANCIAL IMPACT
Establish a smart economic corridor	24.1	24.1
Implement Phase 2 of the Maritime Information System	0.9	0.9
Mitigate the impacts of shipping operations on ecosystems	5.0	5.0
Ensure continued operation of CEGRIM (centre of expertise in marine incident risk management)	20.1	20.1
Enhance and protect ecosystems	7.5	7.5
Subtotal - Québec government	57.6	57.6
Contributions from private and public partners - Smart economic corridor	175.0	–
Total - Québec government and partners	232.6	–

ESTABLISH A SMART ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

With **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the government wants to build the future by making the St. Lawrence a smart corridor.

TOTAL BUDGET: \$199.1 MILLION

Thanks to new information and communication technologies, we can now envision the development of an interconnected and autonomous system along the length of the St. Lawrence that would give all users access to the strategic data they need, which would in turn optimize activities.

An “intelligent transportation system” is generally defined as one that integrates new information and communication technologies to improve system safety and efficiency.

This definition encompasses a wide range of information processing and communications systems and technologies including computers, sensors, electronic devices, communications technologies, and management strategies.

Smart transport systems make it possible to achieve specific objectives, such as those associated with “just-in-time” management, ensuring that all information related to navigation and port activities is available in real time. The advent of these tools has made them indispensable in decision-making and operation prioritization processes, as they make it possible to use telematics to quickly distinguish between critical and non-critical information while focusing on system efficiency and user safety.

Ports in Mississippi and along the east coast of the United States—Québec’s main competitors in maritime transportation—are already investing to integrate new technologies to provide their users with the tools they need to better manage their operations.

IMPLEMENTING THE TRANSFORMATION

The Québec government is committed to transforming the St. Lawrence into a smart economic corridor by supporting the optimization of shipping routes and logistics chains and implementing innovative projects such as intelligent navigation systems.

THREE AREAS OF ACTION

The Québec government will act in three areas:

Optimize transport operations on or near port sites

The government will equip ports to better integrate with increasingly digital supply chains, thus achieving new efficiencies in infrastructure use.

This support for the development of digital infrastructures is designed to connect them with other ports and actors in the logistics chain—ship owners, operators, logistics companies, customers, etc.—to create “smart ports.”

Optimize navigation routes on the St. Lawrence

The St. Lawrence is a complex waterway that presents multiple commercial navigation challenges.

To reduce perceived risks along the navigable route of the St. Lawrence, including commercial navigation risks, while enhancing the efficiency and strength of maritime transport in Québec, the government will support the development of digital infrastructures and the coordination systems required to develop the concept of “intelligent navigation” on the St. Lawrence River.

Intelligent navigation refers to systems that more accurately and dynamically track vessel positioning. This system requires digital coverage of the entire St. Lawrence, with telemetry and a remote command centre. To use intelligent navigation, ships require on-board applications to perform automated information exchange.

Data development and knowledge acquisition

Developing smart ports and smart navigation systems entails centralizing, developing, and managing massive amounts of digital information and making it easily available to users.

Currently, this information is distributed among many different actors, which makes it challenging to develop a big-picture view. The quality of the information itself is also sometimes lacking, and the workforce is frequently not qualified to perform the necessary analyses.

The Québec government, with the support of the federal government and the collaboration of multiple partners, plans to develop solutions to gather, organize, manage, and share information on Québec’s maritime sector, including information on the ecosystems of the St. Lawrence as they relate to port activities and commercial navigation.

AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO DEFINE NEEDS

A smart economic corridor advisory committee will be formed to assist in project governance. Organizations from the maritime transportation sector will be invited to participate.

The committee's work will help the Ministère du Transport to determine industry needs, business solutions, technologies, timelines, as well as funding levels needed to implement this measure.

IMPLEMENT PHASE 2 OF THE MARITIME INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Québec government will support development of Phase 2 of the Maritime Information System.

A smart economic corridor will be established to manage maritime risks and protect ecosystems. This project will be based on a digital platform that hosts:

- Data about commercial freight transport and ports in Québec
- Data on the impacts of maritime activities on marine ecosystems

Phase 2 of the current Maritime Information System will lay the foundation to further develop this platform.

PHASE 1: ALREADY COMPLETE

Implemented by Innovation maritime research institute and Société de développement économique du Saint-Laurent, Phase 1 of the smart economic corridor has already made it possible to collect, process, and disseminate data on the movement of ships and freight on the St. Lawrence.

The project brought together multiple partners including Québec's five port authorities, St. Lawrence Shipoperators, the Laurentian Pilotage Authority (SLS), the Canadian Coast Guard, ministère des Transports du Québec, Transport Canada, and the St. Lawrence Seaway Corporation.

PHASE 2: ENHANCING THE PROJECT

A budget of \$0.9 million has been earmarked for Phase 2, which will cover Québec's entire port system to enhance analyses and content offered by the Maritime Information System on an ongoing basis to improve its functionality and to expand its geographical scope.

Completing Phase 2 will also make it possible to connect the system to databases for other modes of transportation, within a multimodal perspective, and establish new collaborations with artificial intelligence research centres.

MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF SHIPPING OPERATIONS ON ECOSYSTEMS

The Québec government will continue efforts to mitigate the impacts of shipping operations on ecosystems.

IMPACT RESEARCH PROGRAM

The government has set aside \$5 million in funding to establish a research program on mitigating the impacts of commercial shipping operations on ecosystems.

The program will be managed by the RQM (Réseau Québec Maritime) network, which pools the knowledge of all Québec's universities and a number of colleges, technology transfer centres, research centres, public and community organizations, and private companies in the maritime sector.

The research program will focus on intersectoral collaboration and open innovation all across Québec.

The research program will cover two components:

- Mitigation of the impacts of commercial navigation on the St. Lawrence River ecosystems
- Mitigation of the impacts of commercial port operations on the St. Lawrence River ecosystems

THREE STAGES

The program will proceed in three stages:

A cluster of experts representing key stakeholders will be assembled. Experts will be selected for their expertise on the issues being addressed. Their role will be to identify relevant research and actions required to ensure the success of the research program.

A first series of calls for projects will be launched, targeting the issues identified. Submitted projects must fill the gaps in currently available data and knowledge. They may also collate strategic data and share it with potential users through a centralized data-sharing tool.

A second series of calls for projects will be launched to propose solutions to impacts that have been identified and prioritized. The selected projects will have to encourage technological innovation and sustainable development.

Implementing this measure will make it possible to identify concrete ways to ensure the sustainable coexistence of maritime transport economic activity on the St. Lawrence and the protection of the environment and marine ecosystems.

ENSURE CONTINUED OPERATION OF CEGRIM (CENTRE OF EXPERTISE IN MARINE INCIDENT RISK MANAGEMENT)

To foster the pursuit of CEGRIM's mission, the Québec government has confirmed its support for the institute with a budget of \$20.1 million in its 2020-2021 budget for the 2020-2021 to 2024-2025 fiscal years.

CEGRIM's main objectives are to protect citizens and ecosystems and better manage the risk of hazardous materials spills in the St. Lawrence.

THE 2021-2025 ACTION PLAN

CEGRIM will continue implementing its 2020-2025 Action Plan, designed to make Quebecers less vulnerable to risks associated with maritime transportation.

The CEGRIM Action Plan sets out measures to complement existing structures and efforts that serve as the foundation for the current framework for managing risks related to marine incidents, Québec's response system, and government coordinated civil security mechanisms.

According to CEGRIM priorities, prevention is the best way to reduce Quebecers' vulnerability to the risks of marine incidents. The government has therefore set the following objectives:

- Promote knowledge of marine incident risk management
- Make the best possible decisions in a maritime emergency
- Enhance preparedness to make incident response more effective and efficient

ENHANCE AND PROTECT ECOSYSTEMS

Resources will be allocated to enhance and protect ecosystems. Striking a balance between the needs associated with the multiple uses of the St. Lawrence and those related to protecting natural environments and landscapes is vital.

SUPPORT FOR THE TWO EXISTING PROGRAMS

The Québec government will build on the two existing programs, Programme maritime pour la biodiversité du Saint-Laurent (St. Lawrence Maritime Diversity Program) and Programme Affluents Maritime (Maritime Tributaries Program), by replacing its previous approach with a new, streamlined structure:

- The St. Lawrence Marine Biodiversity Program is now open to projects in the St. Lawrence River and estuary, and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, with the objectives of preserving, enhancing, and rehabilitating habitats and ecosystems and raising awareness.
- The Maritime Tributaries Program focuses on projects along the tributaries of the St. Lawrence, and includes three areas of action: sediment management, fishery resource sustainability, and rehabilitation of natural environments along the tributaries.

Funding of \$7.5 million will be set aside for these two programs in the 2021–2021 to 2024–2025 fiscal years. The two existing programs will be consolidated into one organization, the St. Lawrence Action Fund, which will streamline processes and promote synergies:

- The St. Lawrence Marine Biodiversity Program will specifically target port activities and commercial shipping.
- The Maritime Tributaries Program will have a special focus on commercial navigation.

A close-up photograph of a man and a young girl smiling. The man, on the right, has a full grey beard and is wearing glasses and a wide-brimmed hat. The girl, on the left, is wearing a red and white hat. They are on a boat, with a large body of water and a distant shoreline with buildings and mountains in the background. A blue callout box is overlaid on the image.

**\$394.3 MILLION
FOR COMMUNITIES
ON THE ST. LAWRENCE**

PART THREE

PROVIDE PROMISING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITIES ALONG THE ST. LAWRENCE

With **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the Québec government is committed to providing communities along the St. Lawrence with promising and sustainable development opportunities.

Every port and port region forms a human ecosystem, with its own particular realities and development potential.

Building on the opportunities provided by the St. Lawrence, the Québec government aims to develop a strong and dynamic regional economy, while respecting local realities. **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** will mobilize coastal communities around the river, and raise the level of wealth in remote regions.

A total of \$394.3 million will be set aside for this purpose.

TABLE 4

Provide promising and sustainable development opportunities for communities along the St. Lawrence 2021–2025 financial framework

(in millions of dollars) — Amounts initially allocated in the Québec government’s 2020–2021 budget

MEASURE	PLANNED ACTION	FINANCIAL IMPACT
Develop industrial port zones and logistical hubs	166.3	37.1
Modernize Québec’s shipbuilding industry	200.0	–
Develop marine biotechnology	7.0	7.0
Promote access to the St. Lawrence through maritime public transit	21.0	21.0
Subtotal - Government of Québec	394.3	65.1

DEVELOP INDUSTRIAL PORT ZONES AND LOGISTICAL HUBS

The government will support the development of industrial port zones and logistical hubs. Under **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, **\$166.3 million will be allocated to these zones and hubs**.

Of this amount, \$150 million will come from the Economic Development Fund and will be used to support businesses. \$14.6 million is earmarked for plans and specifications for construction of multi-user infrastructures and certification of ready-to-build industrial sites. An additional \$1.7 million will support development of a range of tools to support industrial port areas.

A NEW IMPETUS FOR INDUSTRIAL PORT ZONES AND LOGISTICAL HUBS

In recent years, efforts have been made to establish development-ready industrial port zones and logistical hubs along the shores of the St. Lawrence. To date, however, multiple issues have curbed their development.

With **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the government will give a new impetus to industrial port zones and logistical hub projects with a renewed vision.

MAINTAINING THE INDUSTRIAL PORT ZONE MODEL

The Québec government is committed to maintaining the industrial port zone model.

INDUSTRIAL PORT ZONE

Coastal area that combines industrial and port uses, is specially equipped, and is located wholly or partially on the water and/or the shore. This includes:

- Ports able to accommodate large freight vessels
- Single or multiple industrial parks linked to a port and a multimodal transport network (road, rail)

Companies located in these industrial parks enjoy logistical capabilities that integrate port services to receive their inputs or ship their freight to North American and international markets.

Industrial port zones make it possible to develop the assets of selected ports by tying the port infrastructure to industrial uses and nearby transportation. However, the approach adopted must take into consideration realities on the ground, which vary greatly, as well as development and investment opportunities.

The Québec government will provide support for various industrial port zones, based on their potential. To assess their potential to attract industry, a review of existing industrial port zones will be performed in the near future.

Territorial boundaries will also be reviewed. To be included, industrial zones or sectors must:

- Be located in the vicinity of port facilities
- Possess strong development potential (available industrial land)
- Have a logistical link (rail or road) to the port facilities located within the perimeter
- Have an intended use compatible with the development of an industrial port zone, e.g., attracting industrial investment for which the proximity of port facilities represents a significant advantage (maritime transport users)

Setting borders for industrial port zones will take into consideration the development of innovation zones,¹ to avoid potential overlaps wherever possible.

Further, local committees for industrial port zones will be maintained but their structure updated and made more flexible. When necessary, representatives of Investissement Québec International and Investissement Québec's regional network will participate in local committee meetings.

1. Innovation zones are delineated geographic areas (with defined boundaries, located within one municipality or several neighbouring municipalities) where research, innovation, industry, and entrepreneurship actors are grouped together and collaborate to instill a culture of innovation, while enhancing the sustainable competitive advantages of these territories or regions.

In addition to representing a sufficient concentration of companies, as is the case with industrial or technology parks, innovation zones include research and innovation facilities, business incubators and accelerators, efficient and scalable transportation, and communication infrastructures that promote dialogue within and outside the zones, and attractive living environments (housing and residential areas, shops, recreation, arts and culture, green spaces, etc.).

LOGISTICAL HUBS

Under **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the government also plans to support the project to establish at least one logistical hub near the St. Lawrence.

A logistical hub is an industrial park linked to multiple modes of transport that brings together businesses and major distribution centres. A logistical hub differs from an industrial port zone due to the presence of the logistics services provided by large distribution centres. Hubs may be located near, and linked to, industrial port zones.

Funding will be available to support business projects within industrial port zones and logistical hubs.

MODERNIZE QUÉBEC'S SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY

The government will support the modernization of Québec's shipbuilding industry.

NECESSARY MODERNIZATION

Shipyards along the St. Lawrence must have the capacity to service the maintenance and repair needs of ships using the river and, more generally, create jobs and wealth for the communities where they are located.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR SMOOTH TRADE

Shipyards are a direct link in the chain of essential services that ensure efficient and smooth trade along the St. Lawrence.

Through this function, shipyards contribute directly to the prosperity of local communities. They provide skilled, well-paid jobs, and since many are active in foreign markets, they actively participate in promoting and exporting Québec know-how.

CAPITAL NEEDED FOR MAJOR PROJECTS

Québec is home to a dozen shipyards along the St. Lawrence, including the Gaspé Peninsula and Îles-de-la-Madeleine. Québec shipyards build, repair, and maintain ships of various sizes and uses for the Québec, Canadian, and international markets.

Some shipyards now face a shortfall of capital needed to carry out major projects. Shipyards must adapt to the technological changes underway, suggesting that going forward the value of new ships will reside as much in their technological platforms as their hulls and standard equipment.

\$200 MILLION GOVERNMENT EQUITY STAKE

Under **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the government will make equity investments in shipbuilding projects.

Financing major, capital-intensive projects like shipbuilding is a constant challenge that limits Québec shipyards' ability to carry out projects. The Québec government wants to give all Québec shipyards the means to complete projects within a more flexible, accessible financing structure.

To this end, \$200 million will be available for minority equity stakes in Québec shipyard projects. Selected projects must generate economic benefits in Québec, demonstrate their profitability, and offer the government prospects of reasonable returns.

DEVELOP MARINE BIOTECHNOLOGY

The Québec government supports the development of marine biotechnology, which has the potential to become a new flagship economic activity and driver of wealth creation in Québec.

Marine biotechnology is a rapidly evolving scientific field that offers alternative diversification solutions. It develops value-added products from the residual biomaterials of the industrial processing of the commercial fishery products, algae, and microalgae available in the St. Lawrence River.

SUPPORT FOR COMMERCIALIZATION OF MARINE BIOTECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS

The Québec government will support and promote the commercialization of marine biotechnology products by creating a program for companies active in marine biotechnology. **A budget of \$7 million has been allocated for this sector.**

\$4.7 million will be invested to pursue the BTM Propulsion Program administered by CRIBIQ (Consortium for Research and Innovations in Industrial Bioprocesses of Québec).

A \$1 million budget will support CRBM (Centre de recherche sur les biotechnologies marines) in the characterization of marine biomass and creation or optimization of extraction processes. This initiative is meant to address shortcomings of knowledge regarding Québec's marine biomass.

A further \$1 million will be allocated to Merinov, Québec's integrated centre for applied research in fishing and aquaculture. This funding is earmarked for the development of a raw material supply chain derived from marine biomass.

Also, \$0.3 million will be provided to the Technopole maritime du Québec organization, to oversee activities promoting Québec's marine biotechnology sector.

PROMOTE ACCESS TO THE ST. LAWRENCE THROUGH MARITIME PUBLIC TRANSIT

The St. Lawrence River is Québec's foremost natural resource and a mainstay of our national identity. It traverses the most populous regions of the province and continues to play a central role in the economy, transportation, tourism, culture, and leisure. Today more than ever, Quebecers care deeply about access to the St. Lawrence.

AN INNOVATIVE PUBLIC TRANSIT SOLUTION

Highly urbanized areas face endemic traffic problems, and Greater Montréal is no exception. The Québec government has plans to use the St. Lawrence River to reduce road traffic congestion in the region.

The government would first analyze the operational structures required for river shuttles, as a complementary mode of public transit integrated into Greater Montréal's overland public transit systems. For example, a river shuttle between Boucherville and Montréal is under consideration as a measure to mitigate traffic congestion caused by the major public works project to repair the Louis-Hippolyte-La Fontaine tunnel.

River shuttles could then become concrete tools for fighting congestion related to major infrastructure projects or structural road congestion.

A NETWORK OF RIVER SHUTTLES IN GREATER MONTRÉAL

Studies are underway, in collaboration with ARTM (Autorité régionale de transport métropolitain), for the development of a river shuttle network in Greater Montréal.

Itineraries will be proposed for routes that show the greatest potential, notably to connect the south shore and east of the island with downtown Montréal.

This promising project will give residents the opportunity to commute to work or school while also providing opportunities for recreational and other uses. In addition, the project will link existing maritime recreational and tourist public transit services to overland public transit systems.

POSITIVE RECEPTION

Recent projects have been conducted to assess public opinion concerning this project. In the summer of 2018, a utility-type river shuttle linking the Saint-Jean-Baptiste wharf in Pointe-aux-Trembles and the Jacques-Cartier wharf in Montréal's Old Port was tested.

A SECOND PILOT PROJECT

Since the trial pilot project showed promising results, a new, longer-running river shuttle pilot project was deployed for the 2019 season to evaluate its potential as a permanent service. Passengers were transported seven days a week throughout the 2019 operating season.

A total of 59,551 customers used the river shuttle. Over 2,700 crossings were made during the 106 days of operation. The average occupancy rate of shuttles was close to 50%, and the daily average ridership was nearly 600 passengers.

**IN THE 2020–2021 BUDGET,
THE QUÉBEC GOVERNMENT ALLOCATED
\$21 MILLION FOR THIS ACTION,
FOR THE FISCAL YEARS.**

ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE

A STRATEGY ALIGNED WITH GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY POLICIES

Québec's Sustainable Mobility Policy - 2030 (SMP 2030) aims to support supply chain actors implementing efficient transportation services by establishing integrated and interconnected multimodal networks to support supply chains in a low-carbon multimodal transport system. Efficient maritime transport is an essential component of greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction.

This is equally true of Québec's 2030 Plan for a Green Economy (GEP 2030), which calls for the electrification of transportation, optimal use of different transportation modes, and intermodality to reduce GHGs.

Many of the measures proposed by **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** are a concrete response to these government objectives, including:

- Establishing more efficient and effective port infrastructure and terminals
- Increasing short-sea shipping
- Establishing closer ties with logistics partners
- Implementing projects that foster enhanced connectivity with other North American transportation modes and networks
- Optimizing navigation routes and integrating multimodal databases

With these measures, **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** will promote the following:

- Optimizing logistics chains and intermodality for a multimodal transport system with a low carbon footprint
- Developing short-sea shipping to facilitate a modal shift from road to maritime transportation in selected regions
- Reducing trucking freight

The measures set out in **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** are consistent with, and complementary to, the SMP 2030 and GEP 2030. By focusing on the optimization of maritime transportation, intermodality, and connectivity, these measures contribute to GHG emissions reduction targets set out in the SMP and the GEP 2030.

EVALUATION

An evaluation of the results and impacts of **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** will measure the following elements in particular:

- **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**'s contribution to the electrification of the Québec economy
- **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**'s contribution to the 37.5% GHG reduction target for transportation set out in GEP 2030 and SMP 2030
- Its contribution to meeting the target for a 25% increase in the tonnage of freight transshipped at ports and rail intermodal centres in Québec
- Improvements to the coordination of maritime transportation and modal shift to other modes of transportation to reduce GHGs
- The balance of GHG emissions resulting from the desired increase in maritime traffic compared to the implementation of **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** measures, whose impacts will be reflected notably by a decrease in GHG emissions

CONCLUSION

With **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE**, the government is making public its new maritime vision, which will make the St. Lawrence a powerful vector for economic, social, and environmental development.

To achieve these objectives, and provide the St. Lawrence with modern and competitive port infrastructure, \$300 million will be invested in the following projects:

- Montréal Port Authority's new Contrecoeur container terminal
- Maritime infrastructure projects aimed at economic recovery and the development of various maritime transportation markets on the St. Lawrence
- Implementing a new investment program for maritime facilities and equipment

To ensure that navigation on the St. Lawrence River is efficient and respectful of ecosystems, a \$232.6 budget from the Québec government and partners will also enable us to make the St. Lawrence a smart economic corridor, while mitigating maritime risks and protecting ecosystems.

The development of coastal communities is also among the Québec government's objectives, and promising and sustainable pathways to growth will be cultivated, notably by developing industrial port zones and logistical hubs, modernizing Québec's shipbuilding industry, fostering the growth of marine biotechnologies and promoting maritime public transit. A \$394.3 million budget will be allocated to implement these promising actions.

The **ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE** vision falls squarely in line with the Sustainable Mobility Policy – 2030 and the 2030 Green Economy Plan. Its implementation will be evaluated based on a number of clearly identified and identifiable factors.



THE ST. LAWRENCE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF QUÉBEC'S FUTURE. THROUGH ADVANTAGE ST. LAWRENCE, THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO HARNESS THE POTENTIAL OF THIS EXCEPTIONAL RIVER TO INCREASE QUEBECERS' COLLECTIVE WEALTH AND CHART A NEW COURSE TOWARD PROSPERITY AND GROWTH.



