

Making strides towards the completion of highway 25

MONTREAL, June 9/CNW Telbec/ - Julie Boulet, Minister of Transportation and Minister responsible for the Mauricie Region, and Michelle Courchesne, Minister of Education, Recreation, and Sports, Minister of Family Services and Minister responsible for the Laval region, along with Laval Mayor Gilles Vaillancourt and several Laval MPs have announced the selection of Concession A25, S.E.C. (Infras-Québec A25) to conclude a 35-year partnership agreement for the design, construction, financing, operation, and maintenance of the completion of highway 25.

Concession A25, S.E.C. is comprised of the following members: MIP Quebec Holdings, L.P. and Concession A25 Funding 2 Ltd. Participants also include: Macquarie Bank Limited, Construction Kiewit Cie, Ciment St-Laurent Inc., Parsons Overseas Company of Canada Ltd., Genivar Société en Commandite, and Miller Paving Ltd. Several of these companies are working on large-scale road infrastructure projects in Canada and abroad.

"The choice of Concession A25, S.E.C. was the result of a rigorous selection process co-managed by the ministère des Transports du Québec and Private-Public Partnerships Québec. We are certain that this team of companies that are among the top in the world and are recognized internationally for their large-scale road infrastructure projects via public/private partnerships, will meet this challenge enthusiastically, and will act in the best interests for Quebec", declared Minister Boulet.

The Minister of Transportation also pointed to a number of advantages in the approach that was chosen for the completion of highway 25. "The proposal submitted by Concession A25, S.E.C. was the best offer presented to the government. The cost of the proposal also includes the sharing of risks and responsibilities between the government and private partners. The risks of exceeding the budget and/or failure to meet expected deadlines also fall under the responsibility of the private partner", added Ms. Boulet.

An improvement in traffic flow, and in the quality of life of citizens.

"This section is a missing link and will fill an important gap in the existing highway system. Its construction will solve some major traffic issues. It is one of the means by which we are trying to achieve greater sustainability in our transportation system: by reducing the number of unnecessary detours hundreds of drivers have to make on a daily basis", explained Minister Courchesne.

Minister Michelle Courchesne also emphasized, on behalf of the representatives of Laval, the importance of this project for the population and economy of that region. "What we are accomplishing here today represents a step towards the day when we can finally respond to the needs expressed by a great number of citizens of Montréal and Laval. This project will not only improve the quality of life of citizens, but will also

encourage the development of the city's economic hubs and boost the economic growth of East Montréal and Laval", the Minister added.

Laval Mayor Gilles Vaillancourt said that he was "very pleased that the government is undertaking this final step to complete the metropolitan highway network", stating that "the completion of highway 25 demonstrates a real commitment to the equitable treatment of Eastern Montrealers, and will help people to better balance work and family concerns.

The completion of highway 25 completes a 7.2 km stretch of highway between Henri-Bourassa Boulevard in Montréal and highway 440 in Laval. The project also includes a 1.2 km toll bridge across the Rivière des Prairies.

The concept proposed by Concession A25, S.E.C. consists of a four-lane highway with a 6-lane cable-stayed bridge over the Rivière des Prairies. It will also include a multifunctional path for cyclists and pedestrians, and a reserved public transit lane. The partnership agreement should be concluded by September 2007 at the latest, and the highway is scheduled to be in service by 2011.

Once the partnership agreement has been finalised, a value for money report will be made public. This report will provide all the estimated costs of the project, as well as the important outcomes of the partnership agreement that will have been reached between the Minister of Transportation and Concession A25, S.E.C.

A process auditor will then produce a report on the selection process of the private partner. This report will be available on the websites of both of the organizations co-managing the project for the completion of highway 25—see the ministère des Transports du Québec at: www.mtq.gouv.qc.ca and Private-Public Partnerships Québec, at: www.ppp.gouv.qc.ca.