

# Junction



## Autoroute 30: more than just a bypass route!

**T**ransportation is an indispensable activity that facilitates the creation of economic and social links. The link between transportation and economic development has been the topic of a great deal of literature.

*Within the context of the completion of the A-30 as a public-private partnership, the ministère des Transports du Québec, further to placing the emphasis on solutions that minimize environmental impact, bolstered its research into socioeconomic benefits in the creation of its initial business file.*

*This month, we are revealing to you a few of the economic details taken from the business file, the highlights of which will be revealed to the public when the partnership agreement is signed by the government and its private partner in the fall. The objective is to enable you to discover a new facet of the metropolitan region's bypass route, which will also represent a virtual vector for the Québec economy.*



**Julie Boulet**  
Ministre des Transports du Québec  
and Minister Responsible for the Mauricie Region

## Evaluation of the economic effects related to the completion of Autoroute 30

Various analyses made it possible to compile a portrait of the economic impacts related to the completion of Autoroute 30. Here, we will address four key components.

### 1- Regional economic development

The purpose of this component is to qualify the effect the completion of the autoroute will have on regional economic development, specifically by means of comparative analyses, and to evaluate potential investments that could be attracted by spaces available in existing industrial parks with the advent of Autoroute 30.

A region that is well served by its roads system greatly improves its potential to realize the full scope of its activities. The intersections of autoroutes 10 and 30 are examples of this, as are autoroutes 20 and 30 between Boucherville and Brossard, which help to explain, at least in part, the economic development in these areas.

The lack of highway connections is particularly prevalent in certain areas of the Montérégie where this may have contributed to limiting the expansion

of local businesses and the renewal of traditional manufacturing companies. It is a region that offers, among other things, proximity to markets in Montréal, Ontario, and the United States.

According to a recent analysis, the completion of Autoroute 30 could help to facilitate investments of more than \$8 billion over a period of 30 years, and the creation of close to 450 jobs per year in the existing industrial parks on the South Shore that are located in influential highway zones.

**More than \$8 billion over a period of 30 years, and the creation of close to 450 jobs per year.**

### Statement of acquisitions

#### Eastern section

- 65% of files finalized
- 71% of the surface area acquired

#### Western section

- 93% of files finalized
- 98% of the surface area acquired

## Evaluation of the economic effects related to the completion of Autoroute 30 (cont'd)

### 2- Value of time savings in the Montréal region

Two variables are used to estimate the value of time saved as a result of the advent of Autoroute 30:

1. The value of time, which varies depending on the travel method (recreation, work, study, etc.)
2. Anticipated travel time savings in the Montréal region according to time of day (peak and off-peak) and types of travel estimated based on simulations.

Based on these two variables, the economic value of time saved for the Montréal region adds up to an annual amount which, expressed in 2005 dollars, varies between \$161 M and \$222 M. This variance is the result of the fare strategy selected for the highway: by minimizing or eliminating the toll, the economic value of the time saved is

maximized; by maximizing toll revenues, the economic value of time savings is reduced.

### 3- The effects of the toll on economic benefits

It is generally acknowledged that the amount of traffic on the road is one of the variables that are strongly linked to the economic benefits that are liable to accompany the implementation of the road. It has also been demonstrated that the introduction of a toll would lower the amount of traffic.

Initially, the economic study specifically revealed that the introduction of four toll stations would reduce the economic benefits. Time savings dropped by 30% compared with a toll-free scenario.

It is therefore evident that the choice of a toll strategy, namely the number of toll stations, is imperative.

When applied to Autoroute 30, these considerations are translated by the examination of different scenarios with divergent objectives of maximizing toll revenues and economic benefits.

Accordingly, the strategy that was retained relies on a single toll station located near the bridge spanning the St. Lawrence River. This strategy represents a balance between the different objectives sought within the context of the completion of Autoroute 30.

### 4- Benefits for the non-Montréal community in the economic evaluation

The completion of the A-30 will provide a bypass route that is particularly effective from various perspectives:

- In the case of major roadwork on the Island of Montréal or on its bridges, or occasional upheavals on the Montréal roads system, for instance a car accident
- The transportation of hazardous goods can avoid more densely urbanized areas on the South Shore and on the Island of Montréal
- Heavy transit traffic heading to or from eastern Québec, Montérégie, Ontario and the United States can bypass the Island of Montréal, thereby facilitating access to foreign markets.

The completion of the highway will improve access to jobs and services for the populations residing in the western section of the region. In fact, for a large pool of the population located west of Montérégie, the average distance from the existing highway system will decrease from 18 km to 8 km.

## The Montérégie's link

The Montérégie is Québec's second largest administrative region in terms of demographics, and was already an important centre for the exportation of goods before our network linking the 30, 35, 10 and 20 had been completed. In fact, as early as 1999, the Montérégie reported almost as much interurban truck traffic as the Island of Montreal, i.e. 36,800 trips a week, as opposed to 41,000.

As minister responsible for the Montérégie, on February 15<sup>th</sup> of this year, I announced more than \$435 million in investments in the Montérégie's road infrastructures. This ranks us first among the province's regions, in keeping with the extensive plan to upgrade our road system, for which the government has earmarked more than \$2.7 billion in 2008-2009.

This year alone, amounts of \$110 million and \$38 million will be allocated to the development of Autoroute 30 and the extension of Autoroute 35. The development of these two major arteries, combined with Autoroutes 10 and 20, as well as our rail and maritime network will confirm the Montérégie's position as a unique hub of economic activity.

The A-30 will thus fulfil its role as both a bypass route and a genuine link between the Montérégie and its key export markets.

**Jean-Marc Fournier**

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