

## Bids for the last of the four major tenders have finally been opened

**NELSON SERGERIE**  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE

GASPÉ - After nine deadlines for the opening of bids for the last of four major calls for tenders launched on March 21 for the refurbishment of the railway between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé, the two proposals received by the Ministry of Transport were opened on September 18.

Pomerleau is asking for \$258 million and Partenariat Ferroviaire Gaspésie is suggesting \$286 million to carry out the work in the call for bids.

The work consists of repairing two bridges in Gascons, a third one between Gascons and Newport, another in Newport and one between Douglastown and Haldimand over the Saint John River. In addition, one of the two bridges between Grande-Rivière and Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé must be replaced. A retaining wall at Pabos Mills is also part of the bid.

The section between Caplan and Port-Daniel-Gascons is supposed to be functional by the end of 2024,

with the section between Port-Daniel-Gascons and Gaspé ready for use in 2026.

The contract duration is estimated at 28 months, according to the call for tenders, which suggests that the time frame to reach Gaspé by the end of 2026 is extremely tight.

In June, the ministry indicated that questions submitted by contractors explained the postponements. Analysis is underway to validate the bids and award the contract if necessary.

**Another call for tender result remains unknown**

Meanwhile, the contract for the other revised call for tenders to repair various railway structures has still not been awarded.

The public call for bids initially provided for the repair or construction of nine infrastructures, but the request for quotes now only covers bridges.

The sites targeted are a small bridge in Pabos Mills, the Grand Pabos River bridge, the Pabos River bridge, the Barachois bridge, and bridge on Highway 132



The Barachois railway bridge.

Photo: N. Sergerie

in Barachois.

The Ministry of Transport has removed the four retaining walls at Anse-à-Beaufils and Sandy Beach from the project.

The ministry indicates that the revised contract is estimated at more than \$50 million.

Pomerleau submitted the lowest proposal of \$79 million on August 28. Hamel Construction, the only other bidder, is asking for \$83.8 million instead.

For the first contract involving nine structures, only

Pomerleau had submitted a bid of \$104 million.

The ministry had indicated in early June that it was analyzing several possibilities, while only one bidder submitted a proposal.

The option of splitting the contract was ultimately retained, as indicated by our sources. Two of the four major contracts in the calls for tenders promised by Premier François Legault in November 2023 have been awarded so far.

The first was with the Séma group from Sainte-

Flavie for the rehabilitation of the bridges over Grande-Rivière and Anse-à-Brillant, and those over the Émile-Couture stream in Grande-Rivière and the beach in Gaspé will be rebuilt for \$74.9 million.

Stellaire Construction from Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures was awarded a \$37 million contract for six bridges to be repaired in Pabos Mills, Pabos and Anse-à-Beaufils. Quebec announced \$872 million to rehabilitate the rail line between Matapédia and Gaspé.