

Ottawa to invest \$1.2B in Quebec's transit and wastewater

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More than \$1 billion in federal money will be invested into Quebec's public transit and water treatment systems.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Premier Philippe Couillard signed a deal Tuesday on the two matters.

"With this agreement our government will invest more than \$1.2 billion in the infrastructure fund, and the municipal wastewater fund," said Trudeau.

Nearly \$924 million will go into Quebec's public transit over the next three years -- with \$650 million of that funding going to Montreal.

Another \$365 million will go to Quebec's clean water and wastewater fund.

The deal will also see municipal and provincial governments match that spending, for a total of \$2.5 billion on transit and waterworks.

The bulk of the transit funding will be earmarked for Montreal's existing network, as well as buying new cars for the AMT.

"We will have to buy new cars, we will put at level also some station, to wire them, some wire replacement we have to make, we're talking about an elevator," said Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre.

Much of the water funding will go to the Atwater filtration plant.

Quebec is the second province to work out details of the funding transfers announced in the federal budget earlier this year, with British Columbia signing a deal to improve rapid transit in Vancouver, and Yukon signing an agreement on wastewater treatment.

Quebec's premier said this was a fantastic deal that would improve the lives of everyone in the province.

"We are the first province to sign both agreements on public transit and on water treatment, and we are very pleased with that," said Couillard to much applause from the crowd gathered at the STM garage in Montreal.

The two levels of government are still discussing funding for several other large transportation projects, with both governments saying they want to spend tens of billions on infrastructure in the next decade.

"When it comes to our economies, governments can be a strong motor with infrastructure spending," said Couillard.

Coderre agreed with that sentiment.

"It's not an expense, it's an investment in our quality of life," said Coderre.

He added that he was glad that cities are getting more respect from provincial and federal governments.

"We need to work together as a team, because too often we make headlines because Quebec is not taking part. Now we have Quebec being the first province to sign two agreements," said Coderre.

Ottawa says it's only the beginning – phase one of a two-part promise to invest billions in the country's infrastructure.

"The first phase is all about upgrades and improvements to existing public transit stock," said Trudeau.

Much of the money for phase two will go to extended the metro's blue line, as well as in [creating a light rail system](#).

In April the Caisse de Depot proposed building a [light rail system](#) that would go over the Champlain bridge, and would connect to the West Island and Deux Montagnes as well, however the [Caisse said it would still need \\$2.5 billion in government funding in order to proceed](#).

The announcement on that funding is expected over the next few months.