



BEACONSFIELD

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NEWS RELEASE

Survey on the MTQ noise barrier project

Residents opposed to the project and its excessive costs for Beaconsfield

Beaconsfield, August 23, 2022 – The mayor of Beaconsfield, Georges Bourelle, and the members of Municipal Council released the survey and results of citizen consultations which show that the population is opposed to the noise barrier project proposed by the Ministère des Transports (MTQ) primarily due to its excessive costs.

The survey data as well as the presentation by the experts who conducted the survey are now available on the City's website at <https://bit.ly/3QPfaGz> (data) and <https://bit.ly/2F4eOJp> (presentation).

Mayor Bourelle had also written, as a matter of urgency, to the ministers of Transport and Health and Social Services following a statement by Montréal's Public Health Department regarding a health issue which contradicts the affirmations of the MTQ experts.

As a reminder, until last May, the MTQ had always maintained that the project was not linked in any way to a health issue but was intended only to improve the quality of life for residents living close to the highway corridor on the south side. Even during the public session on May 17, MTQ officials had assured the population that there were no data regarding health issues in Beaconsfield caused by the highway. However, in June, an expert of the Public Health Department, Dr. David Kaiser, affirmed the contrary in response to representations made by citizens and Mayor Bourelle. Dr. Kaiser who is a renowned specialist in the field, assured that the health of citizens living within 150 metres on both sides of the highway is compromised by the noise, causing stress, sleep loss, cardiac problems, amongst others.

"Considering the new information and these contradictory positions, I have written twice, in June and July, to the responsible ministers of Transport and Health, François Bonnardel and Christian Dubé, asking them for clarification. We need to know whether there is a health issue for our citizens living close to Highway 20, as stated by Dr. Kaiser.

"This has become a crucial question. For years, the MTQ project has only included the construction of a barrier on the south side of the highway to improve the quality of life for the residents living south of the highway. If there is a health risk, this would also apply to the population north of the highway corridor", explains Mayor Bourelle.



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If a health issue exists, the project will become the government's responsibility and must therefore be undertaken entirely at its expense. If this is not the case, the City would have to bear 25% of the costs for a noise barrier built only on the south side, as per the agreement concluded with the MTQ in 2015. The construction of such a barrier is very expensive, as it also necessitates the relocation of major telecommunication and public utility infrastructure.

The project is currently estimated at approximately 60 million dollars. If the City had to bear 25% of the costs, this would represent the equivalent of its existing long-term debt. The scientific survey shows that such funding is not acceptable in the eyes of the population.

In view of the health issue indicated by the environmental health expert, Mayor Bourelle mentions that it was decided to wait for a response from the two ministers prior to establishing the course of action for this project.

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