

The “Vallée de la Transition Énergétique” designated an Innovation Zone

Bécancour, May 29, 2023, PRESS RELEASE - The Quebec government has officially designated "La Vallée de la Transition Énergétique (VTE)" as an innovation zone, the third in Quebec. The VTE has received this recognition under the theme of energy transition, and is the result of **exemplary cooperation between four founding members: the cities of Bécancour, Shawinigan and Trois-Rivières, and the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières**. Together, they aspire to collaborate on innovative, technological, and economic solutions to current societal and ecological challenges.

With its rich history, energy and the industrial sector are once again taking pride of place in our region. Shawinigan, dubbed the "City of Energy" in the 1950s; Trois-Rivières, which in 1733 became the cradle of industrialization in North America; and Bécancour, with its industrial fabric dating back almost fifty years, are on the way to becoming the largest industrial park in Canada. We have every reason to be proud of our past, and to seize the opportunity to assume a strong leadership role in the energy transition.

The world-class VTE will develop and propel three key complementary sectors: **the battery industry, transport electrification, hydrogen and industrial-port decarbonization. In our strategic development plans, we will be attentive to the needs and ambitions of industry, in order to connect a knowledge-based ecosystem with an attractive living environment**. The development of our natural resources and green energies will position Quebec and Canada as leaders in the new North American and international supply and value chains.

Knowledge ecosystem

The VTE is thus equipped with a rich and concerted knowledge ecosystem that will enable us to position ourselves as leaders in research, training, and industrialization in technological innovation. Inter-institutional and inter-organizational synergies will enable the scientific committee to define and guide the scientific programming linked to the three development sectors.

Pole and living environment

Bringing together three cities with a strong heritage of industrial and energy innovation built around the St. Maurice River and the St. Lawrence River, three clusters are being created to provide the impetus for the creation of the Innovation Zone. By providing a convergence point for researchers, entrepreneurs, economic development agencies and organizations, these three clusters will foster exchanges supported by the presence of inclusive, dynamic, sustainable, and locally rich living environments.

Private sector

After more than three years of forging links with the region's private sector players and attracting companies with high growth potential, lasting and productive relationships have been established between the stakeholders in our ecosystem. Many Canadian and international industrial partners are already preparing to set up operations in Quebec and in our region, in connection with the VTE ecosystem. This is the case, for example, with the Ultium Cam project, for which construction has begun on the Bécancour site, and where the designation of the innovation zone was announced.

Infrastructure/investment

The official designation is accompanied by significant public and private investment. These investments will generate high value-added jobs and spin-offs for the Mauricie and Centre-du-Québec regions, and for the whole of Quebec.

Several infrastructures may come to support the development of the VTE ecosystem. Studies are already underway, with the participation of the *Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie*, to map the needs associated with these infrastructures. More particularly, four innovation centers (incubation) of which also an inter-order training center, are envisaged, with distinct vocations and uses, and developed in complementarity on the basis of existing and future VTE assets.

- An innovation center for battery innovation and transportation electrification in Shawinigan;
- A business incubator for the sector of transportation electrification at the Business Center Alphonse-Desjardins of Shawinigan;
- A recovery center for industrial and port decarbonization;
- An innovation center on critical and strategic minerals industrialization and hydrogen in Bécancour (training center, process optimization center).

Workforce

A workforce action plan is also being drawn up to address the strong recruitment and training needs of companies, and the related needs that will arise in the years ahead. Competent organizations in the region are actively collaborating to offer options relevant to the issues and challenges at hand.

Valuation VTE

What's more, the VTE wishes to set up a value-adding structure (VALO VTE) to bring to market the full potential of innovations from its ecosystem or from any companies linked to our sectors, in order to create wealth. The creation of VALO VTE will enable us to be on the lookout for these opportunities, to accompany and financially support researchers, entrepreneurs, industrialists, and investors in order to modulate and facilitate their drive towards a low-carbon future.

In conclusion

Partner companies and organizations in the VTE innovation ecosystem welcome the Quebec government's designation of the Energy Transition Valley Innovation Zone. They will now be able to accelerate their projects by relying on the additional credibility offered by the VTE's reach in the province and internationally, and benefit from the leverage effect in their efforts to develop a new green and sustainable economy.

The VTE is proud to be able to give even greater impetus by becoming an innovation zone, and would like to thank all its partners for their support, their willingness to "do it together", and the great cohesion that emerges from our collaborations.

Quotes:

Alain Lemieux, General Manager: "The VTE will be a world-class catalyst that will enable us to consolidate Quebec's position as a leader in the battery industry, transport electrification, hydrogen and industrial port decarbonization. We'll be providing knowledge workers, entrepreneurs, and industrialists with a living environment that's attractive to talent and investment, essential elements for sustaining our momentum and ambitions. Equipped in this way, we will boost research and innovation to achieve the highest standards in sustainability and circularity, and our innovations will be more widely promoted to drive our Quebec businesses forward, creating wealth in our economy through a strong and sustained market impetus."

Pierre Ducharme, Chairman of the Board of Directors: "The recognition of the "*Vallée de la Transition Énergétique*" as an innovation zone confirms the validity of a process of reflection begun several years ago by a grandfather who wondered what he could offer his grandchildren and the community that had always supported him throughout a long career in heavy industry. By the end of the evening, he had drafted an initial text that raised the idea of a vision of a decarbonized world. Several iterations later, we have an expanded team motivated to support the creation of inclusive and attractive living environments, backed by high-level technical knowledge, and supported by entrepreneurs willing to rethink the practice of their trade. We now have everything

we need to reverse an environmental worrying trend. Together, we can confidently begin to build a sustainable society. The future looks bright.

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- Find out more about [Vallée de la Transition Énergétique](#)
- See the Quebec government's press release, "[Launch of a new Innovation Zone - Vallée de la Transition Énergétique: a third innovation zone is taking shape.](#)"

Source :

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