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**PRESS RELEASE**

*For immediate release*

**ANNUAL OPENING OF GILMOUR HILL:  
THE COMMISSION ACCEPTS THE CITY'S FINANCIAL SUPPORT  
TO GO AHEAD WITH THE DECISION**

**Québec, October 18, 2011** – The status report of Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) on the evaluation of issues regarding the accessibility of Gilmour Hill in winter emphasized major obstacles. The result is that, in the short term, it will be impossible for the National Battlefields Commission to make the hill accessible to motorists this winter. Important construction work would first be required to ensure environmental protection, the continuity of infrastructures, the safety of users, and compliance with the laws.

The Commission will therefore follow the recommendations of PWGSC experts to immediately initiate the last phases of the feasibility analysis before deciding the issue. Moreover, in order to accelerate the decision-making process and allow the population to be informed more rapidly on what will follow, the Commission has accepted Québec City's financial offer in order to go ahead with the drawings and specifications at this stage. Should the Commission decide to open this traffic lane year-round based on the feasibility analyses' conclusions, the work could then be scheduled a few months ahead of time.

Last January, the Commission entrusted PWGSC with the mandate to analyse the biophysical, road foundation and social aspects of Gilmour Hill and its surroundings, i.e., to inventory the components of the environment deemed at risk, make a survey of road system structures and appurtenant features, do a geotechnical investigation of the composition and stability of infrastructures, and estimate traffic and other aspects related to the mission of the Commission.

The current phases of feasibility analysis do not guarantee that Gilmour Hill will be open year-round, but they will allow us to examine further certain environmental and infrastructure strategies as well as their impacts, with a view to making an enlightened decision. This decision must also respect environmental rules, especially the *Species at Risk Act*. It must also consider the requirements associated with the upgrading of the storm drainage system with the perspective of using de-icing and abrasive materials, as well as the proper impact mitigation measures. Finally, this decision will naturally take into account the cost financing possibilities for the repair and maintenance of Gilmour Hill.

Considering its mandate, which is to preserve the heritage and natural character of the park, Québec City's rallying site *par excellence*, and its willingness to assist in the City's work, the Commission felt that it would be better equipped to assess the feasibility and implications of a possible winter opening of Gilmour Hill.

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