



Mayor's message – December 2009

For municipalities, November is generally dedicated to budget activities – preparing the next year's budget. This year's budget preparation is particularly challenging for many municipalities because it comes right after the municipal elections and many find themselves with a major change in their Town Council member composition – some with almost a complete new group of Council members.

Baie-D'Urfé is fortunate in that aspect, since all returning councilors were acclaimed including the new candidate for Council who replaced Councilor Huguette Thomassin, who decided not to pursue a second mandate.

Thus the local budget process has gone off without a hitch. Council has met several times to fine tune the budget taking into consideration the outcome from our Public Budget Consultation meeting, the difficult economic environment that the country is still experiencing and an exorbitant agglomeration tax increase as leaked by the press during the recent Montreal mayoral election campaign. The number being circulated at the time was in the order of a 15% increase in agglomeration taxes over that of 2009. Such a situation would translate into an additional tax burden of about 1.2 million dollars for Baie-D'Urfé citizens.

Last year, Baie-D'Urfé citizens paid about 12.9 million in taxes with 8.9 million going to pay for agglomeration services and about 4 million going toward running the Town. Yup, you read the figures correctly... almost 70% of the taxes collected in Baie-D'Urfé went to the Agglomeration last year. Moreover, during the 2001-2009 period, agglomeration taxes went up 125% while Baie-D'Urfé local taxes only went up 10% (as a comparison, the cost of living went up 16% during that same period).

You will be hearing a lot of noise from your mayor and from the mayors of the other demerged cities with regards to this never-ending escalating and out of control City of Montreal agglomeration budget. Year to year agglomeration increases have to be reasonable and manageable, otherwise the Montreal Agglomeration budget will bankrupt us all!

The 2010 Baie-D'Urfé budget will be adopted at a special Council Meeting to be held at 7 p.m. January 12, 2010 at Town Hall. We were obliged to postpone our usual December budget meeting since the agglomeration budget will only be adopted in January.

Local news

I made reference to the municipal election earlier in this column. I want to take this opportunity to thank former Councilor Huguette Thomassin for her dedication and hard work for the citizens of Baie-D'Urfé during her last mandate and I truly welcome her offer to continue serving our community as one of our valued volunteers. Thank you, Huguette!



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I would also like to welcome our new Councilor, Peter Fletcher. I am certain that he will be an asset to the Town Council. You can learn more about Peter Fletcher in this month's Council Communiqué.

Also, on behalf of Councilors Wayne Belvedere, Chuck Colomb, Kim Millette, Lynda Phelps, Janet Ryan and myself, I would like to thank you for your confidence in acclaiming us all for a second mandate. You can be assured that I will continue to work as hard as always to ensure that you are heard and well-served at both the local and agglomeration levels.

Council has been assigned new portfolios for this new mandate. They are:

Wayne Belvedere	Public Security and Industrial Development
Chuck Colomb	Finance and Administration
Peter Fletcher	Public Works and Town Infrastructure
Kim Millette	Seniors and Cultural Affairs
Lynda Phelps	Parks, Recreation and Environment
Janet Ryan	Town Planning, Transport and Agglomeration Support
Maria Tutino	Agglomeration, Intergovernmental Relations and Youth

Loss of special citizens

Our thoughts and prayers go to the families of former Baie-D'Urfé Fire Chief Don Fraser, former Baie-D'Urfé library president Ray Tunmer, Council meeting regular and Baie-D'Urfé cheerleader Jean Louis Denis and (former long time citizen and Baie-D'Urfé demerger activist) Rose Woodhouse. We thank them for their very positive contribution to our community.

I would also like to invite you to check out our new website at www.baie-durfe.qc.ca. Special thanks to Diane Werner and her team comprised of volunteer citizen Richard Gregson, and staff Mélanie Laroche, Darlene Ward and Nathalie Hadida for a great job. Let us know what you think.

Last but not least, please keep an eye out for the Town's winter newsletter which will go out the first week of December to learn the latest on town services and upcoming events.

Maria Tutino
Mayor