



MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER FROM TOWN HALL

Mayor's Message



Heidi Ektvedt | Mayor

Council welcomed residents to the White-side Taylor auditorium for our March council meeting and it felt surprisingly natural to be back in person after two long years of virtual sessions. This location allowed citizens to be comfortably distanced, as well as accommodating the technical support needed to live-stream the meeting which continues to be posted on our website. One of the highlights of the evening included the adoption of a resolution by Council for awarding the tender for professional services to review and reform our urban planning bylaws. As the Town works through this two-year process, there will be many steps and opportunities for citizen participation.

March 11th marked the second **"National Day of Remembrance for Victims of COVID-19"** and in a symbolic gesture, flags across Québec were lowered throughout the province, including at our Town Hall. With the government announcements of relaxed health measures and reopening of daily life activities, the dedicated meetings I have been attending held by the MAMH have ended and the number of those with the CIUSSS West-Central Montreal has been reduced.



With deep sadness and horror, I watch the war in Ukraine as they defend, with all their might, their right to democracy and their homeland. I have no doubt that Ukrainians will be received with compassion and preparedness as the city of Montreal works through their dedicated department "integration of new immigrants" and engages with local partners. One such non-profit is the **CARI St. Laurent**, whose staff is experienced in working with people fleeing war-torn countries. They provide services in welcoming, integration, social matters, language and assistance with job search. For Baie-D'Urfé citizens who want to

help, **The Ukrainian Canadian Congress** has a Québec Provincial Council & Montreal branch and their website, **uccmontreal.ca**, provides many opportunities, including monetary, supplies needed to ship to Ukraine and supplies needed for the expected arrival of Ukrainians in Montreal. There is also an online volunteer form that includes small and larger ways to help those arriving in Montreal. If you are interested in donating goods, but are limited in getting them to the drop-off locations, please reach out to me directly at **514-457-6291** or **hektvedt@baie-durfe.qc.ca**.

As I turn my thoughts back to our town and our local council, I am reminded of the importance of democracy in our roles as elected officials. It is with that mindset that I value the process and respect that each council member contributes equally to that end. We have an independent council, bringing their experiences and perspectives to make joint decisions for the collective of this community.

As we approach **National Volunteer Week** in April, it's a reminder how important volunteering is. Within the Town, over **300 volunteers** come together to lead our library, public security, recreational clubs, citizen engagement and local events, communal gardening and participate in Town committees, just to name a few. In addition to Town-related groups, you dedicate hours to volunteering in our local schools, you coach a sports team and you volunteer within your personal networks. Whatever you do, no matter how little or how much, it brings a richness that can't be quantified in dollars and cents. **During the week of April 24-30th, we celebrate the heart of our community and your empathy in action that makes the world a better place.**





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Council Communiqué



Stephen Gruber | Councillor

Having served on Council for four months now, I can reflect in an informed way on issues raised by some citizens about our Town. This column focuses on two of them. They are:

1. The increase in the number of Town staff and
2. Who runs the Town?

I have lived in Baie-D'Urfé for 40 years. I remember well the days of the \$10 renovation permit and a quick review of plans by Gordie Charette and his committee. I was also here of course for the re-establishment of our town after the demerger when we only had two cents in our bank account.

THE INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF TOWN STAFF

For better or worse, the world has changed since those days. The legislative requirements placed on the Town from the Province and citizens' expectations of services to be provided by the Town have grown significantly. The Town has to respond to those changes. Overall, I believe we can be confident in how we are responding to these changes while still firmly promoting the values of a community that is supportive of one another: a key value that makes our Town very special in the hearts and experience of so many of our citizens, including mine.

However, with such changes necessarily comes a requirement for additional staff with the skills that we need to meet the changed environment. For example, citizens want improved communication, additional recreational programs, appropriate responses to environmental issues, reform and enforcement of our by-laws, good relations with corporate citizens in our Industrial Park, fair and efficient management of our HR resources to ensure a stable and loyal workforce, maintenance and im-



provement of our public infrastructure (buildings, roads, drains, etc.). Many citizens are increasingly aware of how important it is when permits are requested for the Town to carry out a thorough review of compliance to property development codes. This is in order to protect the environment and avoid harming the neighbours' enjoyment of their own properties and damage to the Town's infrastructure.

When reviewing the establishment of new staff positions, it is seen that they directly respond to the concerns outlined above. Staff expansion is the cost of getting the results that we want, and not of "empire building". While not all the desired results are realized overnight, particularly with what we have lived through in the past two years, I believe that we are demonstrably moving in the right direction.

WHO RUNS THE TOWN ?

With regard to this question, it might be helpful to note how governance is legislatively decreed for towns in Quebec. Essentially, one can envision the Council as the Board of Directors and the Administration as the managers with the Director General as the CEO. Having led and sat on several corporate and non-profit boards, I am well aware of the key question of division of responsibilities between these two components. I was satisfied with the mandatory training now given to all new Councillors by the **Union of Quebec Municipalities** that clearly defined these roles.

In the broadest of terms, the Council is responsible for establishing the vision, policy and direction for the Town, evaluating the results and calling for correction as necessary. Meanwhile, the Administration is responsible for achieving the results set for it by the Council. This means that it is not the role (or in the power) of individual Councillors to interact in the management of any Town department. Councillors have the right through the Mayor to request an investigation and report back from the Director General on any issue.





Similarly, it is not in the purview of the Administration to take the Town in new directions not approved of by Council.

With this as background, I can report that vision, policy and goal setting for the Town are firmly under the control of the current Council (I obviously cannot answer for previous Councils). Currently, there is healthy debate between both Councillors, and between Council and Administration on the direction to be taken on any one issue, as well as which issues need to be addressed. The Administration always follows resolutions adopted by the majority decision of Council. This is how it should be. To date it is my experience that our Director General has responded appropriately to any questions or requests that I have raised.

Another important aspect of how this Governance system works is how easily it ensures an opportunity for any Councillor to introduce a new issue for discussion and possible inclusion in the Council's future agenda. In Baie-D'Urfé, this opportunity is given in a meeting dedicated to special and new issues held every month (one of the minimum of three full meetings of Council held each month). I have requested issues to be included at those meetings and to date never experienced a problem with their inclusion.

It is a human system. There will inevitably be mistakes made from time to time. What is important for me is that effective mechanisms for questions to be asked, responses obtained and responsibility allocated exist. I can speak only from my experience, but to date, we have such a system that can manage the balance between governance and management. I remain optimistic for the future outlook for Baie-D'Urfé as we prepare to launch the next important phase that will define our collective future: the reform of our by-laws, especially those concerning property development, related infrastructure and our protection of the environment.

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT

The individual citizen also has a key role in keeping the Town running smoothly. For example, if you have a particular problem relating to a Town service, the first remedy is to phone the relevant department and report the problem. The phone numbers and email addresses are all easily found on the Town website. Secondly, bear in mind that while I believe it is the intent of our departments to provide the best service they can, there will inevitably be situations where allocation of resources does not necessarily mean your problem can be dealt with instantly. Thirdly, I would respectfully suggest that citizens keep an open mind and collect all the relevant information on any issue they may have before jumping to hard-and-fast conclusions. There are often more factors at play surrounding any issue than might have occurred to just any one individual.

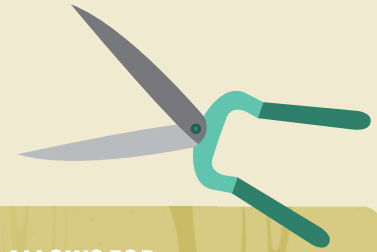


The other great way that citizens can individually promote the value of "citizens supporting citizens" is to get involved as a volunteer in any one of the myriad volunteering opportunities in our Town. I know from my own involvement in the **Yacht Club**, **VCOPS** and the **Coast Guard Auxiliary** that the benefits of this are very much a two-way street. Fellow citizens benefit from your contribution and you, the volunteer, often receive all sorts of unexpected, intangible benefits that come with being part of something larger in one's life.





SPRING PRUNING OF YOUR TREES



Spring is just around the corner, and although most of the trees in our town are not yet displaying their handsome foliage, they need our special care during this period. The beginning of spring is an optimal time to prune your trees, that is, to selectively cut back their branches. During this phase of their annual cycle, trees are generally dormant, which means that they slow down their metabolism or internal processes. Their energy expenditure is drastically reduced in order to stop growth and conserve their ability to survive the winter. This adaptive strategy in northern tree species allows them to withstand the extreme cold and damage caused by frost and strong winds.

The transition between their dormant period and their budding period (production of buds for foliage) also leads to a change in energy distribution. Their metabolism will spread the available energy evenly throughout the branches of the tree to produce the structures needed for foliage. However, the presence of senescent, dead or structurally problematic branches takes away some of the energy that could be used to strengthen the robust parts of the tree. By removing these unproductive parts before the resource allocation period, the growth and integrity of the tree is enhanced when it breaks dormancy. In early spring, pathogens and insects are also dormant and pruning wounds are less likely to be infected by them. **This is an ideal practice and does not prevent dead, diseased, broken or dangerous branches from being removed at any time.**

Nevertheless, it is essential to make sure of the right time for pruning each tree species. Some species, such as birch, maple and linden trees, like to be pruned later because of the strong flow of sap in early spring.

Although pruning is to some extent beneficial to tree growth, it should be done sparingly and judiciously. No more than 20% of a tree's crown should be removed each year. This maximizes life expectancy and ensures good growth and healing. **You should also never cut off the top of a tree or prune it into a ball.**

PRUNING YOUR TREES ALLOWS FOR:

- » Ensuring the safety of citizens
- » Maintaining the tree in good health
- » Balancing the tree by maintaining its natural shape
- » Improving flowering and fruiting
- » Densifying its foliage
- » Keeping branches away from residential structures

Pruning your trees should never be used to reduce their growth and development. Therefore, the dimensions of the tree at maturity should be considered when selecting your tree species.



REMINDER: The Town's spring collection of branches from **April 18th, to June 19th**, takes place every Monday, except Easter Monday (April 18th) and Victoria Day (May 23rd). These are postponed to Tuesday. **Branches with a maximum diameter of 10 cm, and maximum dimensions of 3 m (length) x 3 m (depth) x 1.5 m (height) are accepted.** Your branches must be deposited at the side of the street **before 7 am on the morning of the collection.** For more details, please consult the 2022 collection schedule available on the Town of Baie-D'Urfé website.



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What's New!

Philippe St-Aubin | Communications coordinator



EASTER HOLIDAY

Town Hall and the Public Works building will be closed from **Friday, April 15 to Monday, April 18, 2022** inclusively. *Happy Easter!*



Resignation of Councillor Janet Ryan



On behalf of myself and Council, I wish to extend thanks to Mrs. Janet Ryan for her long-time service to the town in her role as a council member. Her passion and devotion to the town over her many years are valued and we wish her well as she enjoys life as a private citizen and member of our community.

Heidi Ektvedt
Heidi Ektvedt, Mayor

JUNIOR COUNCIL

THE BAIE-D'URFÉ JUNIOR COUNCIL IS BACK!
All Baie-D'Urfé youths from ages 11 to 18 are welcome.



NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, April 26th from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Fritz Community Centre

Please contact Councillor **Wanda Lowensteyn:**
wlowensteyn@baie-durfe.qc.ca

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

On **NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK** taking place **April 24 to April 30**, we would like to thank all the volunteers.

THANK YOU for your involvement in our great community!
Your contribution makes our town a better place to live.



ERRATUM: Please note that there was an error in the Mayor's Message in the March 2022 Municipal Newsletter - Edition 801.

1. Yves Lamoureux's certification should have read as follows: *LEED certification*

We apologize for the inconvenience.