

Une ville en harmonie!
A town in harmony!

EXPRESS

ROSEMÈRE

NOUVELLES / NEWS

Rosa Blanda
Emblème floral de Rosemère
Rosemère's Floral Emblem

JANVIER / JANUARY 2009
VOL 21 / NO 1



2009 Budget Highlights

- The sound and responsible management of public funds
- The improvement of our organizational structure
- A permanent voice for our citizens and a transparent democratic life
- Potable water of better quality
- A healthier environment
- A harmonious and stimulating cultural, sports and recreational life
- A richer community life and a community committed to helping others.
- An integrated family policy lived out on a daily basis
- Conclusion

2009 Budget

Investments and projects enhancing your quality of life!

Speech by Mayor

My fellow Rosemerites,

In the year's first issue of our municipal bulletin, I am pleased to present the highlights of the Town of Rosemère's budget for 2009. Incidentally, this is the last annual budget of the mandate entrusted to us in November 2005. This one will not prove to be an exception in that the new budget is an extension of those that preceded it and, like them, it is marked by stringency, transparency and vision.

However, two new dimensions have been added in 2009. The first is one that certainly raises some concerns. I refer, obviously, to the worldwide financial crisis, which has translated into an economic slowdown that, according to experts, could well become a recession as early as this coming spring.

While no one had anticipated the scope of the crisis, it should be noted that public administrations, which have always acted prudently and responsibly are those that will best be able to ride out the coming storm. The Town of Rosemère is among them, notably because of our plan, which gravitates around eight key orientations, and which we have strived to respect since the first year of this mandate.

The second element that had to be taken into account in preparing the 2009 budget is the new triennial real estate roll, which went into effect last January 1st. It goes without saying that the updating of Rosemère's real estate assessments made holding the tax bill to a reasonable level a challenge.

As our administration has done since 2005, I am presenting here the budget for the coming year, from the perspective of our eight strategic orientations.





THE SOUND AND RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS

This orientation summarizes perfectly a major aspect of the management approach we have adopted over the past three years. Everything we have undertaken, carried out and invested in has been approached with an eye to sound and responsible management.

This is the perspective, which has guided the preparation work that has gone into each of our budgetary projections.



Therefore, the five-year financial plan adopted in 2007 will continue to guide our management of the public purse in 2009. This plan, it should be recalled, seeks to ensure better control over municipal finances and the evolution of the debt while enabling each department to comply with a strict financial framework.

By extension, our plan emerges as a preferred level for holding our property owners' tax bills at a competitive level compared to those of neighbouring municipalities.

Thus, the 2009 operating budget will be \$23,193,900 before capital reimbursement, capital expenditures and allocations. However, since this amount includes \$288,900 in special projects, the actual operating budget will be \$22,905,000, representing an increase of only 3.57% over 2008, in keeping with the five-year plan.

The positive repercussions of our five-year plan can also be seen in a most practical manner, in our commitment to reduce the impact of the new 2009-2011 real estate assessment roll on taxpayers. This is a highly important aspect, considering that, as of January 1st, 2009, real estate evaluations have increased, on average, by 27%, reflecting the activity of the real estate market in our sector.

Aware of the importance of the increase in the triennial roll, our administration has once again spread differences in real estate evaluations over a three-year period, as permitted by the Act respecting municipal taxation.

Thus, the value used to establish municipal taxes for 2009 is determined according to the real estate value of the unit prior to the tabling of the new roll, to which a third of the variation of the newly tabled value is added or subtracted, depending on whether the latter has increased or dropped. This is known as the adjusted value. In 2010, two thirds of the variation will then be added or subtracted, as the case may be. Then in 2011, the last year of the triennial roll, the total variation will apply. This is the value of the roll that will then determine the municipal tax amount.

In addition to the spreading of the roll, we are introducing an additional mitigating measure, i.e., a reduction in the real estate tax rate. For residential property owners, this rate drops from \$0.725 to \$0.688 per \$100 valuation, while commercial property owners will see a reduction from \$2.30 to \$2.12.

As for taxes on various services, I should start by telling you that the tax on the supply of drinking water remains unchanged at \$125 per residence. In the case of garbage pick-ups, however, the rate must be adjusted to take into account higher landfill costs, representing an increase of \$14 per residential property and \$21 per commercial property.

Overall, therefore, the average 2009 tax bill is only slightly higher, despite a major fluctuation in the new real estate assessment roll.

In fact, residential and commercial tax bills increase, on average, by 2.4%. In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to our administration's attentiveness and sensitivity, two qualities that are particularly evident when an economic crisis generates uncertainty.

Within the framework of our five-year plan, we had anticipated a 4.75% commercial tax increase in 2009. However, in light of the financial and economic situation, which arose so quickly, we opted for a more modest increase. Our administration believes that the financial soundness of Rosemère firms is an important part of our collective quality of life.

Our merchants foster prosperity and create jobs, which is why we are particularly sensitive to the upheavals they may soon be facing. We feel it is essential for us to express our support to them by reducing by 50% the tax hike that had initially been planned.

Consequently, the increase in the average tax bill for 2009 will be below the consumer price index of last October 31st. This rate established the consumer price increase between October 31st, 2007 and October 31st, 2008 at 2.6%. By limiting the increase in the average tax bill to 2.4%, we are protecting the buying power of families and expressing our solidarity with Rosemère's business community.

Clearly, we have met the challenge of holding the tax bill's increase to a level that enables us to deliver quality services and continue to invest in our infrastructures. This is a tax bill that is consistent with the three previous ones, as a look at Appendix I of this speech reveals.

Moreover, the key variations in expenses called for by the 2009 budget are consistent with six major municipal activity sectors. I will now present these amounts along with the nature of the increases.

All financial activities increase in 2009. By and large, these are increases which, as I mentioned earlier, allow us to invest in the quality of the services we offer our residents and the improvement of our infrastructures. Some of these increases result from factors that are new, but which we must take into account. Here then are the main variations by sector of activity:

• General administration

Expenses increase by 5.78%, rising from \$3,115,200 to \$3,295,200, notably for the organization of elections slated for November 1st, 2009, as well as for our financial contribution to the Finals of the *Jeux du Québec* to be held this winter, the upgrading of accounting and archival software, and the implementation of the paperless municipal council concept.

• Public security

In this area, the budget increases by 6.17% in 2009, growing from \$4,087,900 to \$4,340,200. This is due to a 5% increase in our contribution to the *Régie intermunicipale de police Thérèse-De Blainville* (police board), which now stands at \$2,909,300. Furthermore, the Rosemère-Lorraine Fire Department must invest in staffing needed to comply with the requirements of the new Fire Safety Cover Plans. Finally, the fact that the Quebec Games will be held in our region, notably in Rosemère, also requires our Fire Department to maintain a more sustained presence as well as special measures ensuring the safety of participants and visitors.

• Transportation and Roads

In 2009, we note a 5.09% increase in expenses from \$4,471,200 to \$4,698,800. This is due to the fact that some of the vehicles in our fleet require repairs resulting from wear. We were also required to take into account the price of diesel, which has not followed the downward trend of gas in recent months. Finally, last winter's heavy snowfalls also compelled us to anticipate an increase in the cost of snow clearing operations.

• Public hygiene

The increase under this heading is in the order of 7.46%, i.e. from \$4,433,900 to \$4,764,500. This is attributed to the rising cost of chemical products essential for our water filtration and wastewater treatment facilities.

• Urban planning

The Urban Planning, Permits and Inspections Department sees an increase of 6.67%, i.e. from \$425,600 in 2008 to \$454,000 in 2009. This projected increase is attributed, by and large, to the implementation of the new urban plan and resulting changes in bylaws. In addition, we will be developing a new Architectural Guide to facilitate the integration and harmonization of construction and renovation projects.



• **Recreation and culture**

Finally, the increase under the heading of Recreation and Culture is in the order of 3.04%, i.e. from \$3,038,600 to \$3,131,000. Projects covered include the organization and preparation of the competitions of the 44th Finals of the *Jeux du Québec*, Winter 2009 edition, as well as an increase in the hours of ice time, further improvements to Citizens' Day, the return of the carnival and the launch of indoor music concerts at Spring and Winter.

APPENDIX I Evolution since 2006

Real estate tax rates by category, per \$100 assessment						
CATEGORY	2009 Real estate tax rates			2008 Rate	2007 Rate	2006 Rate
	General	Special	2009 Total	2008 Total	2007 Total	2006 Total
Residential	\$0.61410	\$0.07420	\$0.68830	\$0.72500	\$0.78000	\$0.85349
Commercial and industrial	1.89130	0.22860	2.11990	2.30540	2.37440	2.45186
Serviced vacant lots	1.22810	0.14840	1.37650	1.44990	1.56000	1.58066

Your 2009 RESIDENTIAL tax bill (excluding water surplus and local improvements)			
Roll value 2009-2011	General taxes (rate: \$0.6883)	Special rates (water, waste, bin)	2009 Total
\$184,500	\$1,269.91	\$337	\$1,606.91
246,000	1,693.22	337	2,030.22
369,000	2,539.83	337	2,876.83
615,000	4,233.05	337	4,570.05

Service taxes by housing units					
		2009	2008	2007	2006
Water		\$125	\$125	\$125	\$125
Waste management	Residential waste	212	198	185	155
	Commercial waste	321	300	280	250

In concluding the highlights of this first orientation, allow me to note that our five-year plan, which calls for stringent tracking of expenses and reasonable planning, has allowed us to release no less than \$2,956,400 to be reinvested, in 2009, in the improvement of services to citizens, debt reduction and the execution of new projects.

Appendix 2 (page 4) presents an overview of the 2009 budget, while **Appendix 3** (page 5) contains a graph illustrating the breakdown of operating expenses.

Appendix 4 (page 5), meanwhile, presents the 2009-2010-2011 Three-Year Capital Expenditures Plan, which is to say, the investments we are planning to make over the next three years to maintain our infrastructures and improve services to our citizens.



THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The permanent committees established in 2007 are bearing fruit. Indeed, these have proven to be highly productive task forces, which advise us well on the directions we should adopt in order to improve services to our citizens and protect our excellent financial health. I should recall that members of the Council as well as municipal employees sit on these committees. It goes without saying that in 2009, these committees will continue to consider the interests of Rosemerites, demonstrating imagination in proposing new approaches to the dispensation of both in-house and public services. The ultimate goal remains, as always, to do more for our citizens within the financial framework we have defined.

A PERMANENT VOICE FOR OUR CITIZENS AND A TRANSPARENT DEMOCRATIC LIFE



In Rosemère, democracy and the citizen's right to be heard are basic elements of our community's vitality. They are evident at election time and at Council meetings, as well as through the regular dissemination of full and forthcoming information. This is the role of the municipal newsletter which, like the recent initiative of Publ-e-mail, is highly appreciated by our residents. In 2009, we hope to increase the number of subscribers, allowing everyone to be aware of current and upcoming issues in Rosemère.

Held once a month, Saturdays with the Citizens continue to enable citizens to meet with their elected officials without an appointment, in order to share their projects and concerns.

Finally, in 2009, Rosemerites will be invited to take part in public hearings dealing with the new urban plan.



APPENDIX 2 | Summary of 2009 budget and 2008 projections

REVENUES	2009 BUDGET	2008 BUDGET	2009-2008 difference	2009-2008 variation	2008 PROJECTION
Taxes	\$19,621,300	\$19,214,000	\$407,300	2.12%	\$19,153,000
Payments in lieu of taxes	416,900	496,000	-79,100	-15.95%	494,300
Services to municipal organizations	1,985,500	1,880,500	105,000	5.58%	1,918,000
Other services rendered	320,900	348,200	-27,300	-7.84%	335,100
Other income	1,658,400	1,603,600	54,800	3.42%	2,077,200
Transfers	477,500	466,188	11,312	2.43%	493,500
Reimbursement of water treatment plant operating expenses	1,085,900	1,002,500	83,400	8.32%	983,700
Sub-total before other transfers	25,566,400	25,010,988	555,412	2.22%	25,454,800
Other transfers (fuel tax, infra transfer)	0	1,593,212	-1,593,212		1,225,100
TOTAL REVENUES	\$25,566,400	\$26,604,200	-\$1,037,800	-3.90%	\$26,679,900

EXPENDITURE	2009 BUDGET	2008 BUDGET	2009-2008 difference	2009-2008 variation	2008 PROJECTION
General administration	\$3,295,200	\$3,115,200	\$180,000	5.78%	\$3,119,300
Public security	4,340,200	4,087,900	252,300	6.17%	4,142,500
Transportation and roads	4,698,800	4,471,200	227,600	5.09%	4,887,400
Public hygiene	4,764,500	4,433,900	330,600	7.46%	4,346,700
Régie intermunicipale d'assainissement des eaux - operations	1,085,900	1,002,500	83,400	8.32%	983,700
Urban planning	454,000	425,600	28,400	6.67%	403,300
Recreation and culture	3,131,000	3,038,600	92,400	3.04%	3,012,100
Financing costs - interests	1,039,500	1,194,100	-154,600	-12.95%	1,194,200
Total operating expenses	22,809,100	21,769,000	1,040,100	4.78%	22,089,200
Contribution to the CMM	384,800	346,800	38,000	10.96%	366,100
Sub-total before capital reimbursement	23,193,900	22,115,800	1,078,100	4.87%	22,455,300
Financing costs – capital reimbursement	2,116,300	2,190,988	-74,688	-3.41%	2,191,000
Sub-total before capital expenditures, other capital reimbursement & allocations	25,310,200	24,306,788	1,003,412	4.13%	24,646,300
Capital reimbursement, fuel tax, infrastructures	0	1,593,212	-1,593,212		1,593,200
Capital expenditures	2,956,400	2,088,200	868,200		1,826,500
Allocation from surplus	-2,770,300	-1,454,100	-1,316,200		-1,301,100
Allocation from reserved funds	70,100	70,100	0		-303,200
Total expenditures	\$25,566,400	\$26,604,200	-\$1,037,800	-3.90%	\$26,461,700
Surplus – income / expenses	0	0	0		\$218,200

POTABLE WATER OF BETTER QUALITY

A priority in 2008, it remains so in 2009. The quality of our drinking water is unquestionably a priority for our administration, which is why we are pursuing the upgrading of our infrastructures.

We earmark \$2,375,000 for the addition of a third UV disinfection barrier at the water filtration plant, allowing us to better protect the quality of the water distributed to Rosemère's homes and businesses.

In addition, \$850,000 is allocated to the rehabilitation of the waterworks and sewer system on Couture Street. This work will provide us with the opportunity

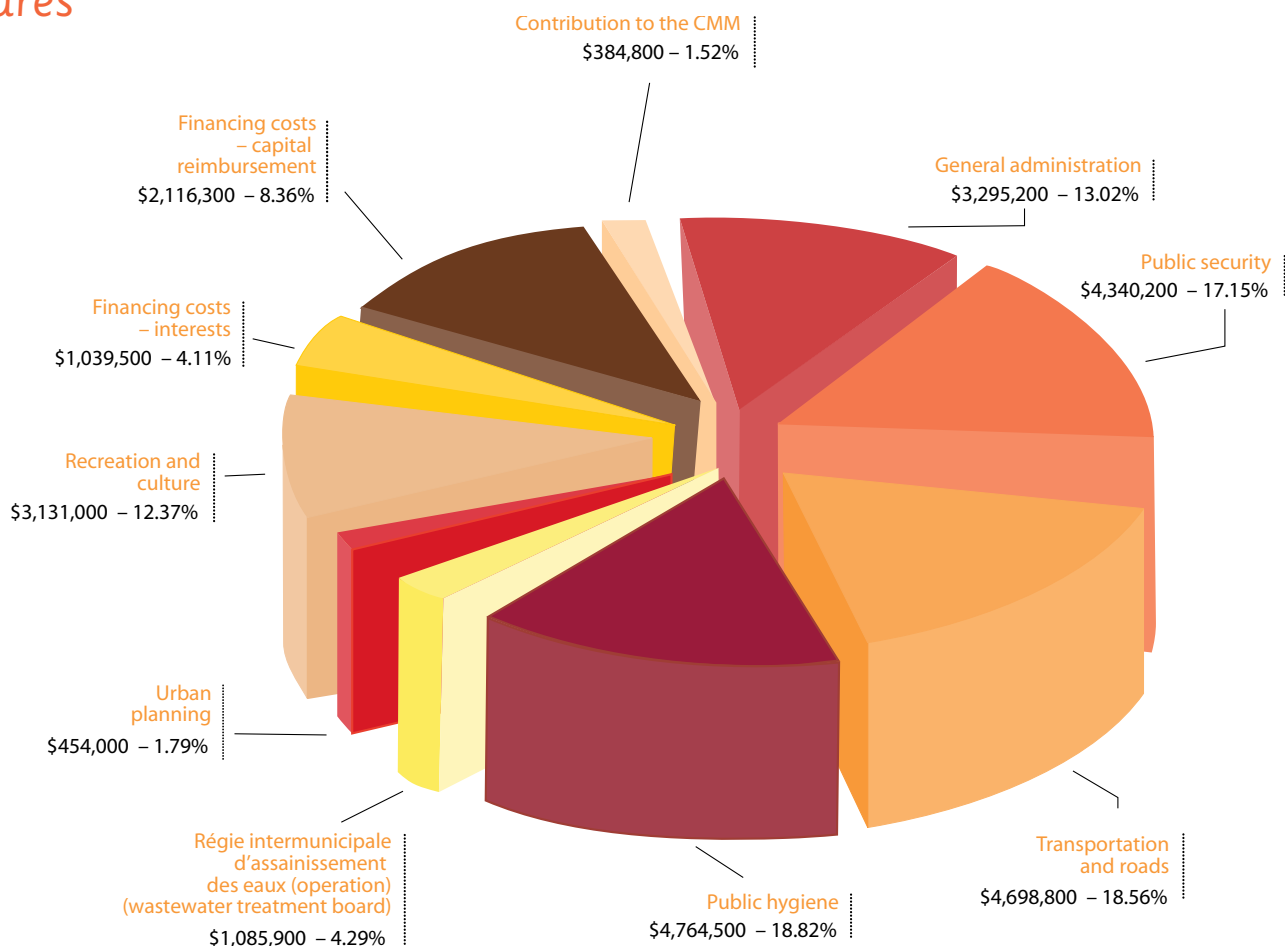
to integrate a bicycle path to the public roadway. This path will be part of the new connection linking Roland-Durand Boulevard to the train station.

As usual, I would like to mention that all of these projects could well benefit from grants from one or both levels of government. We are relentless in our efforts to ensure that we benefit from this form of assistance.

While the rainy summer of 2008 resulted in a drop in water consumption, the fact remains that this outstanding situation does not deter us from our efforts to protect this precious and costly resource. We continue to participate in the campaign to raise awareness of the importance of reducing our consumption of potable water while strictly applying the by-law regulating watering in summer.



APPENDIX 3 | Breakdown of Expenditures



APPENDIX 4 | Three-Year Capital Expenditures Plan

Our budget calls for overall investments of \$13,578,500 within the 2009-2010-2011 three-year capital expenditures plan. Of this amount, \$8,626,400 are earmarked for 2009.

Projects covered in this plan were retained primarily in line with three major objectives:

- Improving services to our citizens;
- Preserving and improving the quality of our infrastructures to protect our assets;
- Ensuring strict control of the municipal debt.

2009 - 2010 - 2011 Capital expenditures plan			
EXPENDITURES BY ASSET SECTOR	2009	2010	2011
Engineering works	\$5,596,900	\$1,691,400	\$1,846,000
Municipal pool	2,000,000	300,000	-
Buildings and lots	190,000	460,000	175,000
Materials, vehicles, office furnishing and equipment	839,500	85,600	394,100
TOTAL	\$8 626,400	\$2,537,000	\$2,415,100
FINANCING			
Administration fund	\$186,100	\$387,000	\$271,000
Working capital funds/parks fund	195,000	150,000	144,100
Long-term loan	5,375,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
Allocation of accumulated surplus	2,770,300	400,000	400,000
Government and other grants	100,000	100,000	100,000
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$8,626,400	\$2,537,000	\$2,415,100
2009-2010-2011 TOTAL	\$13,578,500		



A HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT

The recent years, our administration has set the example when it comes to the reduction of global warming, notably through the acquisition of eco-efficient vehicles and a bylaw on idling engines. In 2009, we continue to encourage the use of bicycles for getting around by completing our section of the Green Route and, as mentioned in Orientation 4, by establishing a new cycling link between Roland-Durand Boulevard and the train station.

I can also confirm that we are maintaining the shuttle service from the western part of Rosemère to the commuter train station.



Finally, with regards to residual waste, I would like to announce that we are pursuing our pilot project for the recovery of recyclable materials from ICIs (industrial, commercial and institutional enterprises). The results of this project will be analyzed at the end of 2009 in order to determine where we go with it.

Protecting the quality of the environment also calls for favouring habits that are more respectful of our soil, air and water. In keeping with this perspective, we supported the opening of the Farmers' Market, which favours less aggressive forms of agriculture and incites us to reflect on the choices we make as consumers. It is with considerable pleasure, therefore, that I announce the return of the Farmers' Market in the summer of 2009.

A HARMONIOUS AND STIMULATING CULTURAL, SPORTS AND RECREATIONAL LIFE

Not only is Rosemère's cultural, sports and cultural life highly appreciated here at home, it is also envied by others. Our artists and creators are most talented, our sports teams enjoy facilities of the highest quality and do us proud, while our program of activities for citizens of all ages contributes to our quality of life.



This year, we keep up our investments to maintain this harmonious and highly stimulating life.

In line with this, we will be conducting major renovations to our municipal pool. With an estimated price tag of \$2.4 million, these renovations will include the addition of water games for our children.

We also hope to enhance our offering in the area of cultural services. The new budget includes funds allowing us to meet demand for services of this nature.

A RICHER COMMUNITY LIFE AND A COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO HELPING OTHERS

As Madeleine Leduc announced this fall, the planned construction of a new OMH (municipal housing bureau) building providing thirty housing units for our senior citizens is now underway. This new facility will be ready to welcome new residents this year. It is our hope that this will enable a larger number of Rosemerites to continue living in the town they so love.



Finally, in conjunction with the Community Services Department, we are pursuing in 2009 the mobile library service dedicated to our senior citizens, offering it to a larger part of this specific clientele.

AN INTEGRATED FAMILY POLICY LIVED OUT ON A DAILY BASIS

The Town of Rosemère's family policy continues to influence our choices in terms of investments and infrastructures. The rehabilitation of the municipal pool, the installation of water games, the quality of our drinking water, the reduction of polluting emissions, the enhancement of our cultural life, services adapted to the needs of our senior citizens who are full-fledged members of the Rosemère family: all decisions in these areas are guided by our family policy.



Public security and peace of mind are also essential to the quality of life of Rosemère residents. The student park prevention program known under its French acronym of PEPP was improved in 2008 and is back in 2009, allowing you to enjoy our parks and green spaces without worry during opening hours.

Held last December, the further improved edition of our Christmas Celebration proved to be another fine success. In 2009, we intend to pursue our participation in this event, in collaboration with the Metro supermarket and partnering merchants. As usual, we have taken stock of the 2008 edition to ensure that activities correspond to the fun interests of young and old alike.

Conclusion

This final budget of the mandate entrusted to us in November 2005 has been particularly demanding, especially given the introduction of the new triennial assessment roll and the increase in some expenses, which by and large are beyond our control.

However, we believe taxpayers will agree that we have risen to the challenge, holding the tax bill increase below the consumer price index without compromising our financial soundness or abandoning our five-year plan.

Better yet, we are able to maintain our investments in road, recreation, cycling, sanitary and waterworks infrastructures.

We hope that the financial upheavals that have shaken world markets will soon be behind us, and that the impending recession will not have the expected scope. This hope has more to do with the vitality of our businesses and our citizens than it does with the financial soundness of our municipality. In fact, I hope that we, as a community, will quickly make our way out of this situation.

I would be remiss if, in closing, I failed to thank all of our department managers for their support and commitment to meeting our budgetary objectives. I would like to thank, in particular, our general manager Michel Gagné, and our treasurer Luce Jacques along with her entire team.

I would also like to pay tribute to the members of the Municipal Council who work tirelessly to ensure the continued wellbeing of their fellow citizens. The effort and energy they contribute to various committees and commissions, as well as their availability are essential to us. It is this synergy, in fact, which contributes to making Rosemère such a healthy town.

Finally, on behalf of the Town of Rosemère, I would like to extend our best wishes for a Happy New Year. We hope that, in 2009, your dreams will be fulfilled, as always, under the banner of good health!


Hélène Daneault, Mayor

