



2017 Budget

**Speech by
Madeleine Leduc
Mayor of the Town of Rosemère**

December 19, 2016

Introduction:**Vision, Rigour, and Determination at the Service of the Community**

My fellow Rosemerites,

Thank you for being here this evening for this special meeting at which the Municipal Council will be adopting the Town of Rosemère's budget for 2017.

First, however, allow me to set the coming year's budget in context. This is the fourth budget of our administration's mandate. As with previous budgets, its development required us to deal with a number of sizeable challenges.

Vision, Rigour and Determination, at the Service of the Rosemère Community: such the theme we gave this budget.

It summarizes our approach to its development and will continue to embody our purpose throughout the coming year.

We believe that this approach is fully consistent with your expectations of our administration.

The cornerstone of the 2017 budget are the savings we achieved with the closing of the fire department. That difficult but courageous decision allowed us to implement measures that will benefit you directly.

In fact, our citizens had questions as to how these savings would be used; the answer can be found in this budget. I will get back to that in a few moments.

Sustainable development: basic to our management approach

We are determined to ensure that Rosemère remains a municipality committed to offering you an exceptional quality of life and ensuring the strict management of its finances.

In short, at all times, our efforts and our actions will be inspired by the principles of sustainable development. Rosemère will continue to position itself as a model in this area.

A case in point is the implementation of organic waste pick-ups. On an environmental level, this initiative confirms our vision and determination to manage our residual waste in a responsible manner. The introduction of the brown bin in our daily lives is perfectly consistent with our community's environmental values.

In participating in this collection, Rosemerites actively contribute to sustainable development and the improvement of their quality of life as well as that of future generations. Let's keep working in this direction. We're on the right track!

And how can we forget the management of the Rosemère Golf Club file when we think about the social dimension of sustainable development? This major issue for the Town and you **was** and **will be guided** by our desire to demonstrate vision, rigour and determination through our actions.

From the outset, it was clear to my administration that this issue could only be settled with your active input. We were determined to give you the last word on this application for a zoning change.

Democracy spoke in this file and we took action. You mandated us to provide a better framework for the development of this part of Labelle Boulevard, in order to properly protect our economic sector while preserving this green space at the heart of our territory.

We will carry out this mandate with determination and rigour for the benefit of all Rosemerites.

A visionary budget, rigorous management

The 2017 budget pursues two major objectives: ensuring that you enjoy exceptional quality of life while respecting your ability to pay. These are part of the major plan to provide Rosemère citizens with sound public finances.

This evening, the City Council will adopt a balanced budget of \$ 29,364,800.

Throughout the year, our decisions were guided by the work of the permanent strategic task force established at the start of 2015 to optimize municipal activities as well as ensure the desired level of services and their relevance.

In 2017, our decisions resulted in a 0.33% reduction in operating expenses over 2016, which is to say that we have yet again succeeded in protection your buying power.

What's more, Rosemère is facing a growing issue that must be addressed immediately, that is the sustainable management of its infrastructures.

For the benefit of current and future generations, we have a duty to ensure the sustainability of our infrastructures whose rehabilitation will require major investments over the coming years.

I am quite proud to announce, therefore, the creation of a recurring infrastructure fund that will help lighten the tax load on future generations. This fund will serve to finance major infrastructure investments and make it possible for us to consolidate the gains achieved by current generations for the benefit of future ones.

Our visionary management and determination to provide more services at a lesser cost, as exemplified by the fire safety file and the agreement concluded with Blainville, now allow us to innovate with the creation of an infrastructure fund. We have come up with a way to reduce our operating expenses in order to invest in our infrastructures and we've managed to improve the level of service in the process.

I am announcing that an amount of \$1,175,000 will be injected into this fund as of 2017. This decision attests to the vision we pursue in an effort to ensure the sound management of public monies for today and tomorrow. It also speaks to our commitment to accelerate infrastructure investments as of next year.

Driven as always by a desire to demonstrate vision, rigour and determination in order to strengthen your buying power, I am proud to announce that, in 2017, there will be no tax increase in either the residential or commercial sector.

Maintaining tax rates at the current level is possible thanks to savings achieved within the framework of the fire safety agreement with concluded with Blainville. Your administration is quite pleased, therefore, to grant its taxpayers a special credit that will amount to \$52 for an average home evaluated at \$416,100.

Our efforts to ensure the strict management of public funds also allow us to hold special rates at the current level for 2017. This freeze applies to the water and waste management rates.

Moreover, our program to help property owners 67 years of age and over remain in their homes will be renewed in 2017. The amount of the annual grant remains unchanged at \$50.

We are also proud to announce that, in 2017, the Town, in partnership with the Rosemère business association, will provide the services of a liaison officer who will improve communication and work with local companies. Our commercial sector's contribution to the growth of Rosemère is significant.

In addition, it is important to note that Rosemère's debt level is under control and places our Town in a most enviable position as compared with others in the municipal world. Close to 80% of our assets are paid for in full.

Our determination and political courage to take sometimes difficult but necessary decisions for the good of the community as a whole now allow us to table a 2017 budget with no tax impact. It was important to us to give you back the savings we achieved in 2016.

Members of my team and I are especially proud of offering you one of the lowest tax rates in the region while delivering quality services.

Three-year capital expenditures program

Allow me now to say a few words about the 2017-2018-2019 three-year capital expenditures plan.

With the creation of the infrastructure fund, the municipal council wishes to accelerate investments in the upgrading of such municipal infrastructures as our storm and sanitary sewers, roads, street curbs and sidewalks.

It should be noted that, in 2017 and 2018, there will be major investments in our drinking water plant. This will allow us to maintain a service of exemplary quality while being better equipped to deal with any situation that might arise.

The three-year capital expenditures plan also calls for improvements to our network of parks and green spaces as well as some municipal buildings.

The Town plans to invest \$11.5 million in 2017 and \$35.8 million over the three-year period. These investments will strengthen and improve your living environment.

Conclusion

The preparation of a municipal budget is a demanding process that requires considerable rigour in order to respect your ability to pay.

It is also necessary to ensure that this rigour leverages the implementation of our vision for our Town, a town whose country charm, sustainability and humanity we value as much as you do.

I feel we're on the right track, after several years of budgetary challenges. The difficult decisions and choices we have had the courage to make will bear fruit and continue to benefit our residents over the coming years. We are committed to making Rosemère a model community.

In keeping with this, one of the highlights of this budget is the creation of an infrastructure fund. This fund confirms our vision for the harmonious development of our various infrastructures over the short, medium and long term.

We are also very proud of the fact that this budget will have zero impact on your tax burden. In presenting a budget that carries no tax increase, we are preserving your buying power.

As responsible managers, we are constantly driven by a desire to reduce your tax load and that of future generations to the maximum. This budget is in line with this vision, which calls for us to make the decisions that need to be made.

As mayor, it is always important to me to provide you with services that live up to your expectations. To this end, I promise to remain attuned to your needs.

In closing, I wish to thank the members of the Municipal Council for their unrelenting commitment to the wellbeing of our citizens.

I also thank the General Manager as well as the Director of Finance and treasurer for their invaluable advice and professionalism throughout this budgetary process. My thanks as well to all department heads for their precious contribution to the development of this budget.

The members of the Municipal Council and employees of the Town of Rosemère join me in extending our best wishes at this time of year. May this period of celebration be a source of happiness to those near and dear to you.

I would now like to turn things over to my colleague on the finance commission, Municipal Councillor Daniel Simoneau, who will present a more detailed picture of the 2017 budget.

Thank you for your attention.