



June 23, 2009

## **Cabinet shuffle in Québec City UMQ to New Municipal Affairs, Regions and Land Occupancy minister: Municipalities need a 21st century taxation system**

Responding to today's cabinet shuffle by Premier Jean Charest, the president of the Québec Union of Municipalities (UMQ), Robert Coulombe, mayor of Maniwaki, congratulated Laurent Lessard on his appointment as minister of Municipal Affairs, Regions and Land Occupancy and offered the UMQ's full cooperation in tackling his roster of current of issues, particularly revision of the Land Use Planning and Development Act (*Loi sur l'aménagement et l'urbanisme*), land use issues in general and major work to be done on diversification of municipal revenue streams – plus the infrastructure programs, which should be made operational as soon as possible

“On behalf of the UMQ membership, I'd like to congratulate the new minister of Municipal Affairs, Regions and Land Occupancy, Laurent Lessard, and promise him our full cooperation. As a former mayor, he's well aware of the municipal sector's concerns, and I'm sure he'll be an outstanding partner in meeting the challenges we're facing, particularly the need to provide municipalities with a 21st century taxation system. I'd also like to wish every success to Nathalie Normandeau, who now takes over the role of minister of Natural Resources and minister responsible for the Northern Plan. The UMQ has very much appreciated her openness, hard work and effectiveness, and we hope to continue working with her on the major sustainable development issues for our communities, such as forests, and energy,” Coulombe said.

The UMQ also congratulated the new minister of Economic, Innovation and Exports, Clément Gignac, and Claude Béchar, who now becomes minister responsible for Canadian

Intergovernmental Affairs and the Reform of Democratic Institutions, as well as minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The UMQ hopes to cooperate closely with both these ministers in order to guarantee dynamic land occupancy and prepare for an economic recovery that will deliver the greatest possible benefits to all Quebecers.

The UMQ has just adopted its own strategic plan for 2009–2013, an ambitious plan in which greater independence and diversification of revenue streams head the list of municipal priorities. With dynamic land occupancy and use as a background, we hope also to establish a management framework for sustainable development, with sources of financing to match. To do this, the UMQ will have to work in close cooperation with many government departments.

The president of the UMQ would also like to congratulate the former mayor of Rivière-du-Loup, Jean D'Amour, on his victory in the Rivière-du-Loup County by-election on June 22. D'Amour is also a former UMQ board member and a former member of our Regional Cities caucus.

Source:

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