

19 July 2021

Mr Grenier,

I am not quite sure what to make of your recent email. I do know one thing: I do not agree with your city's thesis that an important increase in the number of residents will only result in a derisory increase in the Town's operating costs; and, because of that, most of the new property taxes they will pay will serve as manna in reducing the tax bill of today's taxpayers. I do not agree with the fact you have chosen to declare most of your operating costs fixed in your financial projections, which hypothesis leads to your surprising conclusion.

But it is your question (nous aimerions savoir dans quel contexte (par qui? Pourquoi?) vous avez été mandaté?) that puzzles me. Am I to understand that your City needs to know the mandate and motivation of any person who dares take issue with your public claims, such as this one that asserts residential development will reduce taxes for current Rosemere citizens? Or is it the fact that I am not a citizen of Rosemere?

In spite of the rather intrusive nature of your question, I am going to answer it anyway. At the same time, I shall address a rather *ad hominem* comment of your mayor, as quoted in the article in [Nordinfo of the 14th](#) of July written by Christian Asselin, "on se questionne sur l'agenda de l'ex-maire de Westmount." As we all know, the word "agenda" in this context is an anglicism that refers to hidden intentions.

First a bit of background. Throughout my municipal career, which began in 1983, my "agenda" has been to give back to my community, to adopt a regional perspective, to build trust between the electors and the elected, and to ensure each of my City Council's decisions were built on a solid, disinterested base. My agenda in leading the fight against municipal mergers (1997-2001) was clear: it was the forced nature of the mergers that I considered antidemocratic. My agenda was also clear when I refused to get involved in the Montreal megacity in 2002 out of principle and worked *pro bono publico* for three years to effect demerger. In 2010, my agenda to improve the image of public figures was clear when I quit the Administrative Council of the UMQ in protest when Mayor Gilles Vaillancourt refused to step down as member of the same Council. In fact, I was the only municipal politician in Quebec to demand publicly that Vaillancourt step down – years before he was arraigned by the police. My agenda in 2012 was clear when I published a 800 page peer-reviewed book on the Quebec municipal situation, *La folie des grandeurs*, the English version of which was a finalist for the year's best political book in Canada.

What is my agenda as regards Rosemere? Simple. I was bothered for years by City Councils across Quebec who would justify building houses on green space by selling the idea to their taxpayers that it would reduce their tax burden. I think the preservation of green space in Quebec will be helped by a more open, frank, and honest analysis of the fiscal benefits **and costs** that will ensue following any proposed development.

In other words, I decided to help those who wanted to preserve green space in Rosemere by introducing a fiscal, rather than an ecological, argument – but it could have easily been another city.

In conclusion, I am well aware that my involvement in this file bothers you and your mayor, but instead of raising doubts about my supposed hidden agenda, you would do better to focus on addressing my arguments.

Peter F. Trent

