



SHERBROOKE  
**Citoyen**

## POLITICAL AGENDA 2021

### 1. GOVERNANCE AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



#### 1.1. Transparency, citizen participation and public services

- 1.1.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will revise the **Citizen Consultation Policy**, notably in order to protect citizens' right to referendum on urban planning matters, consult the public on budgetary issues, grant the right of referendum initiative on municipal issues, and optimize the use of new technologies in consultation processes.
- 1.1.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will create an independent **Citizen Participation Secretariat**, notably in order to implement the new citizen consultation policy, depoliticize consultative practices, inform the public, and manage appointment processes for municipal bodies.
- 1.1.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will formally regulate the practices of **public and closed plenary sessions** of the city council and municipal bodies, notably by specifying the criteria for addressing topics in closed rather than in public sessions, and by publishing session agendas and minutes within a reasonable time frame.

- 1.1.4. Sherbrooke Citoyen will optimize the City's **website** for ease of use by citizens, improve online archiving to facilitate document retrieval, and strengthen its approach to open data and interactive maps.

## 1.2. Public finances

- 1.2.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will consolidate **municipal finances**, notably by revising rules for cost allocation between the City and developers for public works, and by **diversifying municipal revenue sources**. These new revenue sources will consist of development fees for developers in order to improve funding for community services, and fee changes to encourage behaviours that benefit the environment and public finances and to discourage harmful behaviours.
- 1.2.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will take a prudent approach to the development and management of infrastructure projects, notably to control **debt** and to prioritize **asset maintenance**.
- 1.2.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will implement the proactive long-term management of **municipal land**, notably by regulating development on its territory and achieving environmental conservation objectives.

## 1.3. City council, borough councils and municipal bodies

- 1.3.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will review all of the City of Sherbrooke's **political governance**, notably in order to reduce the number of political bodies, clarify the policy pathway of projects, strengthen the political role of commissions, circumscribe the power of executive committees, facilitate work-family balance, and ensure that the remuneration of elected officials is proportional to their respective workload.
- 1.3.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will strengthen the role and **power of boroughs** as bodies responsible for proximity services, notably with regard to their role in land use planning, community development, leadership and security. Sherbrooke Citoyen will implement participatory approaches and **participatory budgets** to ensure that municipal investments meet community needs, and to foster citizen participation. Sherbrooke Citoyen will provide full **webcasting** of borough council meetings and borough public plenary sessions.
- 1.3.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will implement a change strategy for **organizational culture**, notably in order to involve all employees in the definition of common objectives, improve the quality of customer service, promote a healthy and stimulating work environment, encourage work-family balance, increase telecommuting, foster accountability, and improve the retention

and attraction of talent to ensure that the City of Sherbrooke becomes a model employer in Sherbrooke and in Quebec.

- 1.3.4. Sherbrooke Citoyen will transform existing advisory bodies dedicated to issues affecting youth, students, seniors, women, people of sexual diversity, people with disabilities, and cultural communities into independent, financially-resourced **citizen councils** in order to strengthen their power to advise municipal services.
- 1.3.5. In partnership with the educational institutions on its territory, Sherbrooke Citoyen will oversee the creation of an urban **observatory** to document the situation in Sherbrooke, promote the development of effective public policies, contribute to training the next generation of citizens, and provide expert advice to municipal bodies in Sherbrooke and elsewhere.
- 1.3.6. Sherbrooke Citoyen will ensure that Sherbrooke fully assumes its role as regional capital, and will ardently defend the municipality's interests to higher levels of government, notably by requiring full payment for municipal services rendered to the territory's governmental authorities, campaigning for the establishment of better democratic practices in municipalities, ensuring the elimination of inequities among municipalities, keeping a strategic watch on issues facing other municipalities, promoting purchasing strategies that increase bargaining power, and requiring that senior levels of government fund their fair share of infrastructure and services in shared jurisdictions.

## 2. ENVIRONMENT AND LAND USE PLANNING



### 2.1 Environment quality

- 2.1.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will increase the target for the **protection of natural environments** in its territory from 12% to 17% and will develop an action plan to rapidly reach this target, which will include real estate purchases, the protection of natural environments inside and outside the urban perimeter, the restoration of natural environments, and new regulations.
- 2.1.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will provide the City of Sherbrooke with a credible and ambitious plan to **fight climate change**, developed in collaboration with public, associative, citizen, private and academic partners, in order to achieve greenhouse gas reduction targets set out in the Declaration of Climate Emergency endorsed by the city council.
- 2.1.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will adopt an investment policy to improve the **quality of lakes, rivers and streams** within its territory. This plan will include a strategy to reduce untreated wastewater discharges into waterways, reduce soil sealing, reduce pesticide use, and improve riparian buffers.
- 2.1.4. Sherbrooke Citoyen will adopt a **tree and canopy policy** that will include the protection of mature trees and forests, increase canopy cover, limit deforestation in new real-estate developments, and implement a tree-cutting compensation program. The policy will provide for the systematic greening of public works, a heat island reduction strategy, the protection of buffer strips, and will significantly promote vegetation in all public spaces.
- 2.1.5. Sherbrooke Citoyen will municipalize the collection of all **residual materials from industries, businesses and institutions** in its territory. The development

of its new Waste Management Plan will include systematic compost collection in **apartment buildings**, the facilitation of glass collection, the facilitation of the use of ecocentres by people without access to a car, a review of bulky waste collection, and the implementation of a strategy to reduce single-use items.

- 2.1.6. Sherbrooke Citoyen will make every effort to **reduce the amount of material destined to landfills**, notably by implementing a new integrated system between ecocentres and reuse organizations, and developing a food waste reduction strategy.

## 2.2. Land use planning and sustainable mobility

- 2.2.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will carry out a **review of urban planning bylaws** and of the development plan in order to propose a vision focused on long-term quality of life and the creation of complete living environments that meet the needs of all population groups. This agile and innovative vision for land use planning will include a review of **parking** standards, as well as measures to promote **densification** while enhancing the urban landscape, to promote **mixed** usage and clientele, and to prevent **nuisances** such as noise and odours.
- 2.2.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will review the **Société de transport de Sherbrooke's fare policy** in order to increase ridership, strengthen and expand universal pass agreements with customers and employees of institutions and businesses in the territory, and ensure access to public transit for low-income people.
- 2.2.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will develop a list of actions to be implemented, drawn from the **Sustainable Mobility** Plan and the **Active Transportation** Master Plan, with a realistic and ambitious budget and timetable to reduce Sherbrooke residents' dependence on cars. These actions will include the development of a **public transit** network structure, the addition of **sidewalks** and pedestrian crossings, land-use planning standards that promote sustainable mobility, the implementation of a subsidy program for the purchase of **electric bicycles** and a self-service rental system, as well as the deployment of an interconnected **utilitarian bicycle network** that takes into account the topography and configuration of the territory and provides coverage of all major arteries.

### 3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



#### 3.1. Sustainable economic development

- 3.1.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will review all **business incentive programs**, the industrial land sales policy, and the investment fund strategy to make them consistent with the economic development vision and strategy. This review will include incentives for local businesses, a targeted strategy for innovative and green technology industries, and increased support for collective entrepreneurship and the digital transformation of businesses.
- 3.1.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will revise **incentive programs for construction and renovation projects** in order to upgrade rental housing stock, develop cooperative housing stock, foster the maintenance of heritage buildings, promote architectural quality, and improve universal accessibility and energy efficiency.
- 3.1.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will position Sherbrooke as a leader in the **circular economy**, notably by leveraging **Hydro-Sherbrooke** as a vector of economic development to promote strategies to enhance the territory's energy deposits, such as heat loops, energy districts and industrial symbioses. Thanks to strong partnerships, such as with higher education institutions, **sorting centers** will now be considered key players in the economic development strategy, since they are raw material deposits for existing or future local businesses.
- 3.1.4. Sherbrooke Citoyen will provide the City with a transparent **investment policy** adapted to each of the funds under its responsibility in order to promote responsible investment, and the systematic integration of ESG (environment, society and governance) criteria into its investment processes.

- 3.1.5. Sherbrooke Citoyen will support **sharing economy** and collaborative economy initiatives in the community, promote the development of car-sharing and car-pooling throughout its territory, and expand the range of products available for rent in municipal libraries.
- 3.1.6. Sherbrooke Citoyen will take steps to facilitate efficient and **sustainable transportation** of passengers between other regions of Quebec and the City of Sherbrooke, particularly **between Montreal and Sherbrooke**, in order to encourage tourism and labour mobility. Consequently, Sherbrooke Citoyen will cease all subsidies to commercial flights at Sherbrooke airport.
- 3.1.7. Sherbrooke Citoyen will provide the City with a **resiliency and risk management** strategy to maintain essential services in case of shocks due to climate, energy, health or social disruptions.

## 3.2. Tourism and local purchasing

- 3.2.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will take steps to **consolidate Destination Sherbrooke** with other economic development organizations to promote collaboration with the aim to develop the attractiveness of talents, businesses and tourists by focusing on the distinguishing features of Sherbrooke and the Eastern Townships, namely the proximity to nature, the richness of agrotourism, the potential of bicycle tourism, the richness of its heritage and cultural dynamism, as well as its quality of life and world-class higher education institutions.
- 3.2.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will provide the City of Sherbrooke with a **local purchasing policy** and will encourage its adoption by businesses, groups and institutions within its territory. Economic development organizations will be more supportive of locally owned businesses than others, with a mission to stimulate local purchasing.
- 3.2.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will develop an investment plan to finance the **Agricultural Zone** Development Plan, notably by prioritizing the implementation of a lumber use policy, hiring a resource dedicated to agriculture, forestry and agri-food, integration into the missions of economic development organizations in agricultural, forestry and agri-food sectors, the development of public markets, and the promotion of regional products.
- 3.2.4. Sherbrooke Citoyen will focus on the **downtown** area as a hub for the economic, cultural, community and tourism sectors. Developments will include enhancing the riverfront, forming a cohesive whole linking Lac des

Nations to Bowen Street, promoting sustainable mobility and walking, ensuring quality affordable housing, increasing vegetation and redeveloping vacant lots and buildings. The City will work with residents to implement the vision of the Sustainable Downtown Master Plan, and will consider the views of the broader community prior to and at each stage of major development projects.

### 3.3. Agriculture

- 3.3.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will develop an investment plan to finance the **Agricultural Zone** Development Plan, notably by prioritizing the implementation of a lumber use policy, hiring a resource dedicated to agriculture, forestry and agri-food, integration into the missions of economic development organizations in agricultural, forestry and agri-food sectors, the development of public markets, and the promotion of regional products.
- 3.3.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will reduce constraints to the implementation of agricultural production infrastructures and short circuit services, notably farm sales kiosks, self-service farm kiosks, the construction of greenhouses for vegetable production, and the development of agrotourism itineraries. Sherbrooke Citoyen will also establish measures to make farmland more accessible to citizens.

## 4. QUALITY OF LIFE



### 4.1. Culture, sports and leisure

- 4.1.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will **support cultural actors** by integrating cultural, artistic and artisanal sectors into the missions of economic development organizations, setting up a grant program for artists, creating artist studios, notably in vacant spaces, simplifying the administrative process for street artists, establishing free performance spaces accessible throughout the territory, and reserving a percentage of the construction budgets of new municipal buildings for public artworks.
- 4.1.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will increase funding for Sherbrooke's **libraries** to match the average of large cities, and will ensure equitable access to libraries throughout the territory.
- 4.1.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will implement the **Cultural Heritage** Policy, prioritizing certain actions, notably by focusing on the protection and enhancement of built heritage as a tourist attraction, enriching and promoting the City's art collection, and raising awareness of the intangible heritage of the Sherbrooke community.
- 4.1.4. Sherbrooke Citoyen will ensure that the new sports and physical activity policy is allocated a timetable and a budget to encourage **healthy lifestyle habits** among all citizens. The development of sports infrastructures must promote equitable and free exercise for all users.
- 4.1.5. Sherbrooke Citoyen will implement an **online reservation** service to facilitate kiosk rentals in parks, halls and sports arenas.

- 4.1.6. Sherbrooke Citoyen will allow **alcohol use** under certain conditions in parks and certain public spaces, and will increase the number of **drinking water access points** to promote the greatest possible use of these spaces by the public and to facilitate gatherings for people without access to a private yard.
- 4.1.7. Sherbrooke Citoyen will adopt an **official commemoration and recognition policy** focused notably on toponymy, half-masting of flags, Hall of Honour ceremonies, the illumination of City Hall, event or organization anniversaries, and international holidays and days, in order to ensure greater objectivity in processing requests, and to give greater prominence to the achievements of people from minority groups. In particular, a strategy will be established to give women a greater place in the toponymy by ensuring the parity of new toponyms.

## 4.2. Community development

- 4.2.1. Sherbrooke Citoyen will draft a **housing policy** that will include a strategy to increase the number of social and affordable housing units for singles, families, seniors and people with disabilities, ensuring equitable access throughout the territory. The policy will also promote innovative architectural projects to revitalize certain sectors.
- 4.2.2. Sherbrooke Citoyen will facilitate the establishment of **neighbourhood councils** where there is no neighbourhood round table or citizen committee to represent residents to the City, as well as promote territorial cooperation with schools and organizations, support the vitality of neighbourhood watch committees, and strengthen the cultural outreach mission of borough cultural centers, all with the aim to foster community development.
- 4.2.3. Sherbrooke Citoyen will draft development plans for **parks**, in collaboration with users, to guide the annual investments of the City and boroughs towards adapting community spaces to community needs, and will study the possibility of creating new parks and public places on under-utilized parcels of land.
- 4.2.4. Sherbrooke Citoyen will support **collective and community garden** projects and other urban agriculture initiatives to foster community development, in collaboration with local organizations. Sherbrooke Citoyen will also ensure that more edible plants are integrated into the City's flower beds, will plant more fruit trees and shrubs, and will install educational signage to raise public awareness.

- 4.2.5. Sherbrooke Citoyen will combine its **social and community development action plans** into an integrated social policy action plan that will focus on community development and include actions for families, immigrants and minorities, sexual and gender diversity, youth, seniors, people with disabilities and women. Sherbrooke Citoyen will rely on an inclusive organizational approach to ensure that its services meet the needs of the entire population in all its diversity, and that the public spaces in its territory are universally accessible. Sherbrooke Citoyen will ensure that the City of Sherbrooke's service offer takes into account the issue of social exclusion and poverty.
- 4.2.6. Sherbrooke Citoyen will initiate a process to **fight systemic racism** in order to develop recommendations for the prevention of racial profiling, to ensure that the municipal civil service is diverse and representative of all population groups, and to provide awareness and training to municipal staff on **discrimination** issues.
- 4.2.7. Sherbrooke Citoyen will adopt a policy to support **Indigenous** people in the national reconciliation process, to reduce racism and discrimination against them, and to highlight the historical contribution of their nations to the culture of Quebec and Sherbrooke.
- 4.2.8. Sherbrooke Citoyen will improve collaboration and partnership with the community and social economy sectors, notably by ensuring that all **support programs** offered to businesses are also accessible to community organizations, such as renovation grants, access to professional services, pooling of goods and services, and workforce attraction and retention strategies.
- 4.2.9. Sherbrooke Citoyen will adopt a **road safety** policy that will include shared street projects, lowering the speed limit in residential neighbourhoods and around parks and childcare centers, support for citizen groups that wish to take action on road safety, optional safe use of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, awareness campaigns, a safety strategy for children playing in the street, and traffic calming measures on streets that meet certain pre-defined criteria, such as curb extensions, speed bumps and pavement markings.