

### **Expanding the emerald ash borer assistance program**

**Longueuil, January 21, 2021** - At the City Council meeting on January 19, Opposition Leader Xavier Léger did not fail to point out that the Mayor's Executive Committee had still not followed up on the majority vote of the City Council, held in November 2020, aimed at expanding the assistance program for citizens struggling with the emerald ash borer. Noting that since November 2017 the Mayor seemed to have more foot on the brake than on the accelerator, he said he wanted a change of course by the end of his term.

#### **A program to help citizens born from pain**

The mandate to create the assistance program for citizens dealing with the emerald ash borer was adopted by the City Council in the winter of 2018 and the program came into force only 2 years later, in winter 2020. "Two long years during which, despite all kinds of delays and postponements, the will of the majority of the elected officials ended up winning", said Xavier Léger.

In his speech, the Leader of the Opposition, Xavier Léger, recalled that in Longueuil, it is the Mayor and her Executive Committee who are responsible for presenting the draft by-laws for adoption by the City Council. The other elected members of the Council can propose ideas, but it is up to the Mayor and the elected officials of the Executive Committee to follow up on the orientations adopted by the Council.

Recalling that the recommendation of the Commission de l'aménagement et du développement durable will have been deferred for at least 5 months to the Executive Committee during the year 2019, the Leader of the Opposition pointed out that in three years, the Council held 5 votes on the subject; each time, despite the opposition of Action Longueuil's elected officials, the majority of Council members reaffirmed their desire to provide citizens with financial assistance to cut down their sick ash trees.

It should be noted that on November 18, 2019, the Mayor's Executive Committee had not recommended the notice of proposal presented the previous month by the elected officials of Longueuil Citoyen. Despite the opposition of the Mayor and the elected officials of Action Longueuil, the majority of the elected Council members gave the Executive Committee directions to expand the program to allow citizens who had a tree cut down before 2020 to file a request. The ball is once again in the Mayor's court.