



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## **Jean-Marc Léveillé Wants to Invest \$10 million over 3 Years in Culture**

**Longueuil, September 23, 2021** — Jean-Marc Léveillé announces that if he is elected Mayor of Longueuil on November 7, he will recognize the unique economic and social role of culture in Longueuil. It will respond to a long-standing demand from cultural organizations by allowing them to come together under one umbrella by creating a *Société de développement culturel de Longueuil* (SODECL). This announcement comes with a \$10 million investment in culture.

A non-profit organization, the SODECL will have as its mandate the development of the arts and letters and the promotion of heritage in a development approach of the local economy and tourism. In the long term, it will become completely autonomous, by financing through its service agreements with the City, the operation of performance halls, exhibition halls and leases. The cultural community will have the autonomy and the tangible tools to develop a real cultural strategy in Longueuil. To help start the SODECL, Jean-Marc Léveillé will invest \$10 million to fill the current lack of premises for artists from Longueuil, but also to support organizations that have been weakened by the pandemic.

“It is as much an approach to social economy development as it is to cultural development. We must stop seeing Culture as an expense, it is an investment that, when done well, can pay off big time. The cultural industry must be seen as a generator of wealth and it is high time that we understand its role as a lever in economic and social development”, says Jean-Marc Léveillé, candidate for Mayor of Longueuil.

### **A vision for the cultural community of Longueuil**

For Mr. Léveillé, the SODECL model will have the advantage of allowing the cultural community to take control of its development and to seek grants to which the City of Longueuil does not have access as a municipality. The Company will allow resources to be used more efficiently and above all, it will generate new tourism revenues.

“We are changing the cultural engine that the City currently is to adopt a more efficient model that will really give our professional craftsmen the means to create. They are the ones who understand how to do cultural development. The City will retain its role of supervising the practice of amateur arts, but will finally recognize a distinct role for professional and semi-professional artists in Longueuil.” - Jean-Marc Léveillé.

The City of Longueuil would sign an agreement with the SODECL for the organization of free outdoor shows in the parks and for the return of a large-scale summer cultural event in Longueuil. The SODECL would also become a privileged partner of the City in the construction of the future Longueuil Cultural Complex, artist workshops and exhibition halls of national caliber, in particular with the Church at St. Mark Park in Longueuil.

“Longueuil has several artists of national and international renown. Let us take our culture out of its suburban logic to give it the stature of the 5<sup>th</sup> largest city in Quebec, and the tools of a cultural capital of the Montérégie.” - Jean-Marc Léveillé.