

**Ceci n'est pas  
qu'une porte**



Fédération des coopératives  
d'habitation intermunicipale  
du Montréal métropolitain

**ANNUAL REPORT  
ENGLISH TRANSLATION**

## **Preparing for the future A continuous mission**

Louis-Philippe Duperré  
President of the Board of directors

The right information constituting a basic ingredient of all successful strategies, in 2009, the board of directors of FECHIMM concentrated on broadcasting to its members information that may help them ensure sound management of their collective enterprise.

Driven by a desire to favour member management of its member cooperatives, the Federation held a Education symposium on operating agreements.

The activity provided a better understanding of these agreements with the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) or the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

Other aspects of the management of our collective enterprises such as refinancing and building inspection were also discussed. Through its communication tools, the Federation has also tried to distribute information about renovation grants available through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) under the Economic Action Plan of Canada.

### **WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

In 2009, the Board of directors met 14 times. Three of those meetings were telephone conferences. During their mandate, two administrators left their functions. In June 2009, Clévis Cabrera of the Coopérative Mercier resigned from his position to join the GRT Réseau 2000+. Maryse Dandurand of the Coopérative Des nations also resigned from her position in October. To replace her, the Board co-opted Lise Thibodeau who was making a comeback on the Board of Directors of FECHIMM. At the end of the year, one position remained vacant.

### **RELATIONS WITH THE CQCH**

Last November, some members of the Board of directors represented the Federation at the strategic reflexion activity organized by the CQCH. A membership contract was also signed by FECHIMM, the other federations and the CQCH. This new type of contract between the provincial regional federations in Quebec is to make formal the CQCH's authority to inspect its regional federations, such as FECHIMM.

### **FECHIMM IN ITS OWN ENVIRONMENT**

Very present at the CQCH, FECHIMM also takes part in the AGA of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada (CHFC) and in its board of directors.

The Federation has worked with several organizations over the past year, including the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ), the Société d'habitation et de développement de Montréal (SHDM). FECHIMM was also present at the Board of Directors of the Fonds québécois d'habitation communautaire (FQHC) and at the Table de concertation Montréal du Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité (CQCM).

The Federation also took part in the activities of the Alliance des jeunes coopérateurs and in various consultation committees such as the Table Habiter Ville-Marie à Montréal and the Table régionale des organismes communautaires autonomes en logement de Laval. Contacts were also initiated with various other organizations of the community network in Montréal, Laval and the Lower Laurentians.

### **THE POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE AND PROMOTING COOPERATION**

In 2009, the political action committee, created at the 2007 EGA, has developed and implemented a strategy of electoral intervention in Montreal. The committee presented four major demands to the municipal political parties in Montreal. These concerned the situation of cooperative housing, public funding, the inclusion policy and the creation of a municipal land bank.

A public debate bringing together candidates from the three main parties was held on October 14th. The activity has enabled the Federation to disclose the solutions it puts forward and its vision of the development of the Movement in Montreal, but did not result in firm commitments on the part of the political municipal parties. A progress report was presented at the Education Symposium in October. Since then, the committee has developed and proposed to the Board an intervention strategy for 2010 to support the proposals of the Movement concerning the much needed safe and affordable housing and to enhance the cooperative strategy in response to these needs.

## **POLICY FOR A GREEN AND FAIR FECHIMM**

FECHIMM has strengthened its commitment to a greener and more equitable society in 2009 by adopting a policy aimed at developing new energy-efficient consumption patterns that promote local procurement and favor businesses from the cooperative movement and from social economy.

Based around four main areas, the policy aims to reduce paper use, to optimize the use of electronic tools. It also includes a responsible purchasing plan and implementation phase; the Federation has undertaken the implementation of its policy in 2009. New initiatives are also taken in 2010.

## **SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATIVE HOUSING**

At the end of the year, FECHIMM, in collaboration with the CQCH and the other regional federations, took part in a mobilization campaign to convince the Quebec government to include in its upcoming budget the necessary funds for further development of cooperative housing and community development.

In the form of a campaign letter, the Movement invited the members of its housing cooperatives to make their Member of Parliament aware of the importance of its investments. Among others, it stated that nearly 450,000 households still have to devote more than 30% of their income on housing in Quebec and that more than 10,000 households are still waiting for affordable housing under the AccèsLogis program.

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## **GENERAL MANAGEMENT Issues, projects and action**

André Noël  
Executive director

In 2009, the Federation dealt with important issues, inescapable issues, often interrelated, sometimes permanent, sometimes new ones. In this short page, we will deal with 5 major issues which have affected and will continue to affect, in 2010, the functioning and the operations of the Federation.

### **1. MANAGE THE GROWTH**

The Federation of housing cooperatives cannot ignore what is its purpose: promotion, development, consolidation, defense of housing cooperation.

In 2009, 14 cooperatives joined FECHIMM, which brings its membership to 435. This growth in membership, due to the acceleration of the end of the operating agreements of the federal programs and to the so-called «modernization » process of the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) forces the Federation to expand its delivery of services.

The establishment in 2009 of the Service Centre is an example of new service offerings. With the participation of FECHIMM in the development of cooperatives, alongside the GRT Réseau 2000+, other opportunities for growth open up.

### **2. ACCEPT THE LEADERSHIP**

FECHIMM's membership accounts for nearly half of all cooperatives in the CQCH network. Therefore, it can afford to invest more in some areas somewhat removed from daily operations, and when an opportunity presents itself, initiate and take charge of projects that otherwise might not emerge.

This encourages FECHIMM to support its own political action committee, in addition to CQCH's, to express, bring and defend with elected officials or decision makers the demands and proposals of its members, such as easing the standard of 75% of median rent and the issue of refinancing of projects under emphyteutic lease.

This motivates FECHIMM in its initiatives in terms of electronic communication and information technology. This allows FECHIMM to keep the project EFFICIENT CO-OPS that it coordinates throughout Quebec and to negotiate its renewals.

This is what brought, in 2008-09, FECHIMM to participate, alongside the CQCH, to the elaboration, the negotiation, the planning and the implementation of the two Service Centers for the cooperatives of the PSBL-P program, of which Montréal covers all western Québec.

### **3. STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE**

Given the increasing complexity of managing the Federation, the training needs of directors have changed. Already, the Federation offers its directors, as to all its employees, free access to all scheduled workshops. But now we get requests for decision making, evaluation and risk management, etc..

New workshops will be offered to the directors, to future directors and to the cooperatives. Moreover, the Federation will review its methods of intervention to promote greater accountability and self-governance in cooperatives. It is in process.

### **4. ENSURING THE PRESENCE, THE SERVICE AND THE REPRESENTATION**

If FECHIMM is based in Montreal, it is rather limited to supporting its members and not enough present in places of influence with the city or borough. The decentralized decision-making at the district level also presents a huge challenge because of the multiplicity of places, cases, local agendas. The issue of representation in Montreal is also at the heart of the reflexions of the political action committee.

Since the Spring of 2009, FECHIMM is established in Laval to better serve its members of the North sector. In 2008-09, with the support of the City of Laval and the help of the GRT Réseau 2000+, it carried out the first phase of the impressive intergenerational cooperative of Laval: 104 homes to be delivered for February and March 2010.

In the Lower-Laurentians, FECHIMM, depending on the support of the city of St-Jérôme and on the dynamism of the promoter, gets involved in the project of the Coopérative Le Bourg St-Antoine, for seniors with slight loss of autonomy.

### **5. ACCEPT THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGES INDUCED BY THE 4 PREVIOUS CHALLENGES**

Ensuring growth requires investment just like starting new fields of activities. Also, while more and more partners get involved in the financing of the activities, it is becoming necessary to reform our administrative methods to assure a systematic management for each project. Consequently, the outline of budget planning and activity are being fully adjusted.

And to ensure a viable response to the growing demand for services, cost analysis is required. The early reports that were produced indicate that adjustments should be made to the measuring instruments. As FECHIMM lives and must manage continued growth, activity planning is a delicate operation: yesterday's right decisions can quickly become inappropriate.

And in all this commotion, the team must learn to cope and adjust and the work environment can sometimes be affected. Eight people from the services and from the administration have left the Federation during the year. If many, by their departure, were able to speed up their career advancement, the fact remains that the question of the ability to attract and retain staff is a major challenge for the coming year.

Finally, 2009 was the last year of the collective agreement. At the end of 2009, negotiations were underway, but a general agreement has yet to be reached.

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## **Membership: 435 housing cooperatives Regrouping continues to grow**

### **435 MEMBER COOPERATIVES**

FECHIMM's membership continued to grow in 2009. A total of 17 cooperatives joined FECHIMM during the course of the year and 3 have chosen to leave. The 435 cooperatives that are members of FECHIMM represent close to 9900 households and 72 % of all the cooperatives on its territory.

### **CLOSER TIES BETWEEN THE FEDERATION AND ITS MEMBERS**

The work of the new promotion and business development agent, Sylvie Hébert, recruited in the Fall of 2009, is to promote the benefits of being a member of the Federation.

Taking advantage of the development of new projects (EFFICIENT COP-OPS, Development, Service Center, Technical Services), FECHIMM is now able to visit its members and non-members more often. This is how 245 members and non member cooperatives will have been visited by counsellors of the Energy Efficiency program and that 25 cooperatives from the PSBL-P program will have been visited within the context of health checks provided by the Service Centre. Finally, about 80 cooperatives are in regular contact with the Federation for the provision of support for management or bookkeeping services.

## **A POPULAR GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

The programming of FECHIMM's 2009 AGA, focusing on training workshops, has attracted the interest of cooperators. The AGA attracted 163 delegates and observers from 91 housing cooperatives. It was a 56% increase in the number of participants compared to the 2008 to which 104 delegates and observers attended.

## **EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM ON OPERATING AGREEMENTS**

165 delegates from 77 cooperatives took part in the Federation's annual education symposium, last October 31<sup>st</sup> on the end of the operating agreements. In addition to strong participation, the success of the event was reflected in the comments collected at the end of the Symposium. All participants were satisfied, 83% very satisfied with the organization of the symposium as a whole.

## **FECHIMM'S COMMITTEES**

Many committees support the actions of the Board of directors. In 2009, the most active was certainly the **political action committee** established by the board of directors in 2007. Mandated to assist the Board to identify key issues and set the policy priorities of the Federation, it has held information sessions at the AGA and at the 2009 Education Symposium. It has also developed an intervention strategy and organized a public debate within the municipal election campaign in Montreal.

Another regular and active committee is the **finance committee** which meets 4 times a year to work, follow and review the budget estimates.

The **commission de placements (investment committee)** is made up of the same people as the finance committee : the treasurer, the executive director and the person responsible for the finances at the Federation. The Commission de placements meets following the finance committee, in the presence of a representative of Optimum Gestion de Placements, a consulting firm that manages the investment portfolio of the Investment Group.

The other committees met sporadically during the course of the year. Those are the **sustainable development committee** whose goal is to educate members of housing cooperatives on environmental issues; the **ethics committee** whose job is to make sure that the methods and interventions conducted by the Federation keep on improving.

Then we have the **Education committee** whose goal is to promote the integration and the implementation of international values of cooperatism with the members of housing cooperatives and the **Quality + committee**, whose name indicates its goal. The possibility to secure or merge these two committees will be evaluated in 2010.

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## **Member services**

Monique Cadotte  
Services director

The constant search for excellence in the delivery of FECHIMM services led the team of the Federation to continue its efforts to perfect its existing services and their delivery method. Special attention was also given to staff training.

## **REVIEWING THE METHODS**

The employees of the Services division at FECHIMM undertook an analysis of the intervention methods used by the management consultants. For example, a dashboard with performance indicators has been developed and allows to track the evolution of cooperatives. As and when using the scoreboard, the analysis will identify best management practices, document them and communicate them.

We still need to adjust certain calculations and to extend the analysis to other internal methods involving coordination with other sub-services, including bookkeeping and administrative support. Concerning the internal methods, FECHIMM's consulting team adopted new ways of working that foster collaboration among members even though each has its own files. Thus, the mutual support and sharing of information increases efficiency and provide greater standardization of processes.

## **NEW ACCOUNTING STANDARDS**

The bookkeeping team had to adapt to the new accounting standards. These new rules have been implemented and, with the adoption of accrual accounting, the quality of the work has been greatly enhanced, thus limiting the number of costly adjusting entries at year end by the auditors.

### **EMPOWERMENT**

Always focusing on the importance of sound management of physical, financial and human resources in cooperative enterprises, a clearer direction towards empowerment continued. The advisory team adjusted to ensure that each action encourages self-management, mutual accountability and autonomy of cooperatives. If those are well known values of Cooperators, the practice of responsible self-management remains a very uncommon reality. Our interventions must be reviewed to better generate, disseminate, encourage and promote.

### **STAFF TRAINING**

A training program for all new employees and a development program for existing employees according to the required qualifications was established. Notably, the management counsellors who have recently joined the team, received a training of at least 30 hours covering the theoretical and practical aspects of managing housing cooperatives. The employees recruited in 2009 received an integration training and certain employees have benefited from a francization program with the help of Emploi Québec.

### **AN ESSENTIAL TRAINING**

A total of 39 workshops were delivered in 2009, compared to 103 in 2008. Of that number, 95 were offered at home, which constitutes an increase of more than 60% in relation to 2008.

In addition, 44 workshops were delivered under the training schedule. These workshops offered at FECHIMM's offices attracted 419 participants from 268 different cooperatives. The Education symposium on the end of the operating agreements and other aspects of cooperative management, held October 31, also attracted a high turnout.

Note that several workshops are now also offered in English, thereby reaching a new clientele. In addition, customized training plans were developed for 22 cooperatives following an assessment of their special needs. An assessment grid for evaluating the quality of the workshops has also been designed and a reflexion on ways to improve the supply in this area is ongoing.

### **PERSPECTIVES FOR 2010**

There is still a growing demand for management services and training workshops and a revision of the rates, and also ways of doing things, will be completed in 2010 to ensure that delivery of these services will generate sufficient revenue to assure their self-financing.

In this same vein, and to better adapt to the needs of cooperatives, organizational changes are being considered which could improve the efficiency of the service sector. These efforts should result in improved service quality, more accurate invoicing encouraging accountability and a sustained growth in demand which will force recruitment.

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## **Programme sans but lucratif privé (PSBL-P)**

### **An appropriate support**

Ivelina Nikolova  
PSBL-P supervisor

According to the contract between the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ) and FECHIMM, this sector carried out support education activities with the cooperatives from the programme sans but lucratif privé (PSBL-P).

### **CREATION OF A TOOLKIT**

The sector has begun to develop a toolkit for improving the community life of the PSBL-P cooperatives according to a popular education approach. The first kit created in 2009 is the Management Plan. Based on the duties and powers prescribed by law, this team play is to give each existing democratic body in the cooperative, the powers and duties that belong to them. This is an opportunity to review the role and mandates of each element taking place within the structure: the General Assembly, the Board of Directors, committees, members.

### **INFORM AND EDUCATE**

Two days of thematic information and awareness were held in June 2009, one in Montreal and one in Quebec. They have showcased the service centers established by the SHQ and the various elements to check when

making a preventive inspection of buildings and homes. Participants were familiarized with a set theme on various aspects of managing a cooperative. They also learned how to separate the members' legal responsibilities from those of the directors.

Efforts were also made to encourage PSBL-P cooperatives to participate in the program to help the implementation of energy efficiency measures from the EFFICIENT CO-OPS program. These efforts have paid off because at the end of the year, over 81% of PSBL-P cooperatives were included in the program.

#### **EXTENSION OF THE LOCAL BANK FOR APPLICANTS**

Following the completion of a feasibility study for extending the local bank of applicants, the SHQ and the representatives of FECHIMM, the FÉCHAQC and of the CQCH agreed that they should proceed to extend the pilot project underway in Montreal and Quebec to all the PSBL-P cooperatives in the province.

Secondly, cooperatives linked to other provincial funding programs receiving rent supplement, such as AccèsLogis, could join the project to ensure compliance with the rules for allocating subsidized housing in housing cooperatives .

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGNOSIS**

Carrying out business diagnosis is also one of the responsibilities of the PSBL-P team. Six of these diagnoses were made during the year. Through 160 indicators, they were able to measure four key aspects of cooperative life: associative, financial and property management, along with complying with the operating agreement with the SHQ.

#### **THE LOCAL BANK OF APPLICANTS**

**TOTAL APPLICATIONS DEALT WITH : 604**

**TOTAL ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS COMPLETED : 246**

**INFORMATION SESSIONS IN 2009 : 16**

**NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS AT THESE INFORMATION SESSIONS : 240**

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### **Service Center (SC) Technical services for housing cooperatives**

Mahmoud Karamostefa  
Building Technologist

#### **THE BIRTH OF A PROJECT**

Announced at FECHIMM's last general assembly, the implementation of a Service Centre (SC) dedicated primarily to support the cooperatives from the Programme sans but lucratif privé (PSBL-P) on long-term maintenance of their properties, did not take long to show results. This breakthrough has taken shape over the course of the year to strengthen the provision of services agreement between the Federation, the Société d'habitation du Québec and cooperatives from this specific program.

FECHIMM was assigned the responsibility for delivering property health reports for the 62 housing cooperatives in western Quebec, from the Eastern Townships to the Outaouais region. Another Service Centre was established in Quebec to serve the central and eastern regions of the province. In Montreal in late 2009, the Service Centre was fully operational.

As of last December 31<sup>st</sup>, inspections of buildings and the production of renovation, improvement and modernization budgets, (RIM) were awarded at the required rate and cooperatives have been billed for services rendered during the year 2009. The hiring of a second inspector was also planned.

#### **A PROJECT THAT IS GROWING RAPIDLY**

With the creation of CS, the development of this new service has created another, because the Federation has expanded new skills, which were fit into the team. A new service for cooperatives of all programs has been established and began serving cooperatives. The new technical services sector has been structured to ensure the provision of quality building inspections, production of investment plans and work supervision. This sector oversees the Service Center for PSBL-P cooperatives.

#### **MULTI-YEAR INVESTMENT PLAN (PPI)**

The production of multi-year intervention plans (PPI) is one of the CS' mandates. These plans allow cooperatives to determine the work to be done on their buildings and establish a comprehensive budget and a timetable for completion of work.

#### **REALTY HEALTH CHECK (BSI)**

53 % of the realty health checks have been made for cooperatives targeted in 2009. These health checks include the inspection of the building and of the housing units, the production of a report, data entry to the common database, updating the findings and supporting the organizations.

#### **PSBLP-P HOUSING COOPERATIVES TARGETED BY THE MONTREAL CS SERVICES**

TOTAL WESTERN QUEBEC : 62  
1434 cooperatives housing units MONTRÉAL  
47 944 cooperatives housing units  
PPI DONE IN 2009 48  
77% budgets RAM PSBL-P co-ops  
BSI DONE IN 2009 623  
53 % of PSBL-P housing units inspected

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## **Development**

### **An eventful year and exciting projects**

Neil Mc Neil  
Development Director

In the development of cooperatives, the year 2009 has been eventful for FECHIMM. While 2008 had brought about a very promising partnership with the GRT Réseau 2000+ for realizing housing cooperatives projects in Laval and the lower Laurentians, the year 2009 began with a brutal tutelage of the GRT Réseau 2000+ by the SHQ and the continued suspension of its membership with the Association des Groupes de ressources techniques du Québec (AGRTQ). In these circumstances, to make sure that we continued to try to develop cooperatives in Laval and the Laurentians, the affiliation of GRT Réseau 2000+ to FECHIMM appeared inevitable.

However, the operation generated some reactions, but at the end of the year, we were finally able to see in the GRT Réseau 2000+ the appropriate and promising instrument FECHIMM needed to ensure its contribution to the development of cooperatives.

SHQ has withdrawn its guardianship in September, the financial health of the GRT has been restored, the team was reassembled and the GRT received assurance of its reintegration into the AGRTQ.

#### **FECHIMM GIVES UP ITS OSD STATUS**

For these reasons, the board of directors at FECHIMM finally decided to give up its status as an organization supporting development (OSD), confident that with the help of the GRTs, particularly that of the Réseau 2000+, the Federation « has the means to ensure the project management in the development of housing cooperatives » in accordance with the will expressed by its General Assembly in 2003.

#### **THE REVIVAL OF GRT RESEAU 2000+**

The revival of GRT Réseau 2000+ required a substantial effort on the part of FECHIMM. Its executive director and its development director have been delegated to ensure the development and implementation of a revival plan. Additional staff was recruited and a new location was found.

The Tandem Réseau 2000 + / FECHIMM is able to deliver all the projects put forward by the previous administration, that is to say, the financial commitment of 300 units within the AccèsLogis program in the next two years. A representative membership has been appointed and a strategic planning is ongoing.

#### **104 NEW COOPERATIVE HOUSING UNITS FOR LAVAL FAMILIES**

Managing the implementation of the construction of the Laval intergenerational Cooperative who had received its final commitment in February 2009 was the largest project undertaken by the Development Sector in 2009. The 104 housing unit project on two sites, conducted under the AccèsLogis - Part 1 of the SHQ, also relied on financial support from the City of Laval, the Quebec Renovation Program (PRQ) and Novo Climat, the Energy Savings Program.

The delivery of the buildings was promised for February-March 2010. The establishment of all the welcoming structure for moving into the cooperative housing units is well underway.

### **COOPERATIVE FOR SENIORS IN SAINT-JÉRÔME**

Although the project for the Coopérative d'habitation Le Bourg Saint- Antoine for seniors in St. Jerome has secured a commitment from the SHQ and the support of the City of St. Jerome, it could not be carried out in 2009. The problem is that the cooperative has lost the land planned for the construction of its building after some residents contested its implementation when we put in an application for rezoning.

This project remains a gem for FECHIMM it is so out of the ordinary and it puts forward a very collective housing method of developing housing units for "the newly old", as its chairwoman, Pauline Filiatrault, likes to say. To date, even if the cooperative has the support of the municipality, it is still waiting for land.

### **SOLIDARITY COOPERATIVE ENTRE-NOUS IN LAVAL**

Unique in its kind, the Coopérative de solidarité Entre-nous is a place where six people with intellectual disabilities live. Located in Sainte-Rose in Laval, the cooperative's primary mission is to provide a permanent and stable home to these people. To this end, a contact person is always on hand to ensure the well-being of its residents.

The cooperative, whose board of directors is composed of six representatives of the residents and three support members, works in partnership with the Centre de réadaptation en déficience intellectuelle (CRDI) Normand-Laramée. This approach allows the professional services of CRDI to support and assist the members and the contact person. FECHIMM's support of the project, carried out without government support, aims to incorporate this program to the AccèsLogis Quebec program.

### **FECHIMM AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

True to its mission to support, advise and help develop a level of exemplary solidarity with all sectors of the cooperative movement in Quebec and in the world, FECHIMM continued its involvement in the development of cooperative housing at the international level in 2009. Thus, FECHIMM continued to support the National Cooperative Housing Union (NACHU) in Kenya who has again started to repay its loans, as expected after the 15 month moratorium following the vandalism resulting from the political unrest in January 2008.

Through CQCH, FECHIMM has also supported SOCODEVI (Société de coopération pour le développement international), a Canadian network of cooperative and mutualistic businesses who share its technical expertise and its know-how with its partners in developing countries, in order to improve the economic and organizational performances and the good governance of the cooperatives and cooperative unions in Senegal.

FECHIMM and the Quebec housing cooperative movement supported the Union régionale des coopératives de construction et d'habitat de la région de Thiès au Sénégal. The assistance took the form of technical support to the organization and structuring of the Union for the upcoming development of 2200 homes.

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## **EFFICIENT CO-OPS**

### **Results of the same proportion as the challenges**

Louis-Philippe Myre  
Head of the Energy efficiency project

#### **THE GOALS WERE SURPASSED BY 35%**

At the end of 2009, the housing cooperatives members of the EFFICIENT CO-OPS program continued to contribute to the improvement of Quebec's energy status. The measures implemented in the housing cooperatives on the provincial territory have reduced their electricity consumption by 4,33 GWh (gigawatt-hour). This decrease corresponds to the average annual consumption of 197 single family homes. The EFFICIENT CO-OPS team thus exceeded its goal by 35% for the year. Concerning the activities for reducing consumption of natural gas as a whole, close to 125 000 cubic meters were saved and all in all, close to \$240 000 of refunds were paid back to the cooperatives since 2007.

#### **NEW MEMBERS IN THE PROGRAM**

82 new cooperatives have joined the EFFICIENT CO-OPS program in 2009. This means that 66% of cooperatives in Quebec are in this program since it was launched at the end of 2006. During the last year, the team of counselors in the energy efficiency sector delivered 102 workshops « My efficient co-op » in the cooperatives in our territory (161 across Québec). More than 2250 members of housing cooperatives attended these information workshops. Around 6700 compact fluorescent lamps (4284 in Montréal) were also distributed to the participants of the « My efficient co-op » workshop.

#### **FLUOCOMPACTS AND THERMOSTATS**

The replacement of old thermostats by electronic models and incandescent bulbs by fluocompact bulbs continued during the course of the last year. No less than 13 000 thermostats, of which about 50 % in the Metropolitan Montreal, were replaced during the year. In total, since the program began, more than 54,000 thermostats have been replaced. As for optimizing the lighting of outdoor and common areas, about 225 cooperatives have been visited by our partner, JD Power Pare, who offers a "turnkey" service. This portion of the program has contributed greatly in terms of energy savings.

#### **AN ANNUAL AGREEMENT TO BE RENEGOCIATED**

The negotiation of the agreement between FECHIMM, representing the Quebec housing cooperative movement, and the energy suppliers (Hydro-Québec and Gaz Métro) is an important activity of the project manager for energy efficiency. The agreement for 2009 was signed in the spring, four months after the beginning of the year. At the end of the year, the renewal of the program for a fourth consecutive year was acquired. All we need now is to make it formal.

#### **MEAGER ACTIVITIES AT THE RENOVATION LEVEL**

The introduction of measures to help improve the thermal envelope of cooperatives' buildings in 2009 gave rise to rather modest results. This can be partly explained by confusion among cooperatives about their eligibility for subsidies provided under the Economic Action Plan of Canada if an application was also subject to energy distributors associated with the EFFICIENT CO-OPS program. Further efforts to develop this portion of the program will be made in 2010 to encourage housing cooperatives to enhance their renovation projects by incorporating a dimension of energy efficiency

#### **PILOT PROJECT FOR REPLACING FRIDGES**

A new potential measure for low income households was introduced at the end of 2009. A pilot project for replacing old refrigerators with Energy Star models was tested in Montreal. Around 200 families have been able to buy a new less energy-consuming fridge for the modest amount of \$75. It is more than likely that during the course of 2010, this measure will be launched on a large scale in the metropolitan area.

#### **A NEW WINDOW FOR EFFICIENT CO-OPS**

To better inform the housing co-ops throughout the province, a website devoted to the EFFICIENT CO-OPS program was created in 2009. Launched in the fall, the [www.energie.coop](http://www.energie.coop) provides all the information required to take advantage of the program. The distribution of email infos has also been added to the traditional means of communication of the magazine L'Echo-hop! d'habitation and the regional newsletter FECHIMM Express.

#### **OUR PARTNERS IN THE PROGRAM**

Carrying out the activities to help implementing energy efficiency measures in housing cooperatives in Quebec in 2009 was made possible thanks to the following organizations: Hydro-Quebec, Gaz Metro, the Energy Efficiency Fund for Gaz Métro customers, Gazifère, the Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins and Cooperators.

GWH SAVED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE PROGRAM 2007 0,76 GWh 34

Houses

2008 3,23 GWh 145

houses

2009 4,33 GWh 197

houses

THERMOSTATS REPLACED

2009 13 000

since 2007 54 000

FLUOCOMPACT BULBS

DISTRIBUTED IN 2009

All of Québec 6762

FECHIMM territory 4284

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## **2009 in numbers**

### **A summary of FECHIMM's financial statements**

Daby Jean

Head of Accounting

#### **THE FINANCIAL RESULTS OF THE FEDERATION**

After 2008 generated an operation surplus of almost \$70,000, we began 2009 with great apprehension as to our ability to pass through the year unscathed, given the difficult economic conditions and uncertainties regarding the maintenance of certain funding sources. We anticipated then the possibility of having to absorb a deficit of more

than \$80,000. The year has been difficult and, in terms of the Operating Fund, has resulted in a deficit of \$81,185. Note that the operating fund does not take into account the revenues and expenditures of the Energy Efficiency Fund although it generated a surplus of nearly \$ 60,000. This fund is distinct because it compiles the amounts associated with the purchase and installation of electrical supplies and the amounts received and to be redistributed to other federations and CQCH, creating a distortion in the analysis.

However, considering the net revenue of the Energy efficiency fund as an activity income, the deficit is reduced to \$22,826, an amount almost equivalent to the expected contributions to the stabilization reserve insurance premiums and the victims' reserve: \$ 22,023. Thus, the total deficit of \$ -473 means that in 2009, FECHIMM could not contribute to the dedicated reserves (victims and insurance) without dipping into its own general reserve.

### **ANALYSYS OF THE REVENUES**

A decrease in income from the management of purchasing groups, anticipated earlier this year, materialized with a decline of \$ 123,103 or 44% in this chapter. This element alone explains a large part of the turnaround from 2008 to 2009. At the dawn of 2010, the economy seems to be reversed again, but experience shows that to be viable long term, the Federation must continue to diversify its revenue sources and research methods of operation and processes of delivering services more efficient still.

From another perspective, expansion of FECHIMM continued. The Federation concluded its fiscal year on December 31 with operating revenues amounting to \$ 1,827,742, up 11% on the previous results.

For their part, the launching of the Service Centre and the 33% growth in service delivery revenues have certainly contributed to the growth, but were offset by the costs (salaries, activities, offices) they generated . The revenues from the services amounted in 2009, to 53% of the operating revenues for the year against 44% in 2008.

### **ANALYSIS OF THE EXPENSES**

The expenses of the Federation have also increased during 2008, but they increased twice as much as the revenues. The 21% increase is explained mainly by the increase in salaries and in the contractual fees linked to the increasing demand for services at FECHIMM. The proportion of the budget intended for the salaries has remained stable, at a little more than 65% of the expenses. The professional fees have gone from 4% to 7% of the expenses, mainly for the delivery of the workshops, the management assistance services and the telephone counselling service.

Other interesting fact, the cost of the offices has increased 31%, because more space was needed to house the activities of the Service center and of the Development sector.

Note that following the association concluded with the GRT Réseau 2000+, FECHIMM also occupies space in Laval, near the Metro De La Concorde

### **PROSPECTS FOR 2010**

Without promising any miracles, the year 2010 got off to a better start than the previous year. In fact, if we expect the revenues from the management of the purchasing groups to recover somewhat, a significant number of uncertainties remain, particularly with regard to grant renewal, the unpredictable amount of the sector contribution and for the conclusion of the agreement for the renewal of the collective agreement for the employees of the Federation. And, revenues from the development, which accounted for 11% of the operating revenues in 2009, are coming in according to a capricious schedule which, without compromising the viability, could affect the management of cash-flow.

However, several factors allow us to be confident: the internal work to ensure the viability of each project continues; negotiating the renewal of the collective agreement is going well, the anticipated benefits from the renewal of the EFFICIENT CO-OPS program are tangible; the contribution of revenues from the management of the purchasing groups should become more important ... All these factors lead us to predict the beginning of a rebalancing of the budget plan in 2010

## **Group purchasing**

### **Uniting our forces: economic benefits**

Sylvie Hébert

Promotion and business development agent

Among the advantages for co-ops to join FECHIMM, the purchasing groups are one of the most attractive. The customer support and the development of new combinations are also one of the main functions of Sylvie Hébert, Promotion and Business Development agent at FECHIMM.

#### **SÉCURIMEMBRE ET AUTOASSUR**

SÉCURIMEMBRE and AUTOASSUR are the tenant-insurance and car insurance offered by our partner Cooperators, for the last 12 years. Most of the cooperatives member of FECHIMM have at least one member who subscribes to one or the other insurance plans. These products are very popular, specially the tenant-insurance, as much for their competitive cost as it is easy to join.

The popularity of these products has not diminished in 2009. Sales of SÉCURIMEMBRE, the tenant-insurance product have also increased by 6% and the rate of penetration had reached close to 33% of the 9800 cooperative housing units members of FECHIMM.

#### **ASSURTOIT**

Specially designed to meet the needs of housing cooperatives, ASSURTOIT has been around for more than fifteen years and is the most popular of our purchasing group. This property insurance program is made possible through the provision of insurance of the Canadian Union, a company from the Cooperators group. In 2009, 354 cooperatives participated in the program, almost 82% of the members of FECHIMM. This is an increase of 14 cooperatives compared to 2008.

#### **AFIC**

Falling interest rates which have reached historic lows has sealed the results of the AFIC plan (Intercoop Financial Benefits) in 2009. Revenues generated by this purchasing group have continued to shrink during the first quarter of 2009 until it disappeared over the last three quarters. For the full year, they amounted to \$ 4,190, compared with \$ 107,332 in 2008.

Although the AFIC plan is beneficial notably because of the lack of bank charges, this temporary reduction of interest yield has had an impact on the number of new subscriptions to the program which were limited to 4 to reach 219 subscribing cooperatives at the end of 2009, just 50% of the members of the Federation.

FECHIMM foresees a continuing recovery of revenue from the summer of 2010, which could multiply by 5 the results of 2009 and would certainly restore the popularity of this advantageous plan, developed in partnership with the Caisse d'économie solidaire Desjardins.

#### **THE COOPERATIVE INVESTMENT PROGRAM (PIC)**

After a 2.3% decline in unit value of the shares in 2008, the PIC's investment group rose again in 2009. The increase of 7.44% brought the value of the shares from \$ 5.66 to \$ 6.08, its highest level to date. Despite this significant increase, the total value of the Investment Group in which 35 cooperatives invested, however declined from \$ 635,800 to \$ 604,629 due to withdrawals by cooperatives for a value of \$ 88,747.

#### **DEVELOPMENT FUND FROM THE PIC**

Preferred shares from the Development Fund of the PIC allow cooperatives and individuals to contribute to the financing of cooperative development here and elsewhere in the world. It is a safe investment that gives access to cooperatives to the PIC's investment group. On December 31, 2009, the Development Fund balance sheet showed a value of \$ 127,570 and had offered interest income of \$ 1,646 to investing cooperatives.

#### **NEW LOCAL PARTNERS**

In 2009, FECHIMM signed a partnership contract with **Cooptel**, the only telecommunication cooperative in Québec. This cooperative allows tenants, members of federated cooperatives and employees of FECHIMM to benefit from reduced prices on telephone services and Internet from Cooptel, wherever the service is available.

The partnership with Communauto allows federated cooperative members and employees of FECHIMM to use car-sharing service on more advantageous conditions. In return, the Federation provides visibility to Communauto through its communications and agreed to promote the offer to lease unused parking spaces by Communauto among member cooperatives.

## **UPCOMING DEVELOPMENTS**

Always on the lookout for opportunities for our collective enterprises to benefit from uniting their strength, FECHIMM continues its efforts to develop new purchasing groups. At least two new groups are expected to emerge in 2010. At the end of the year, discussions were underway with an electrical supply company and a Quebec supplier of natural gas.

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### **Information and promotion**

#### **Tools for our members**

Richard Audet  
Communications agent

#### **A NEW FECHIMM EXPRESS**

In 2009, the FECHIMM express got a facelift. More visual and spacy, the Federation's quarterly newsletter went from 4 to 8 pages and it proposes a new grid better suited to today's reading habits. Its content has also been improved. Apart from a better selection of news and more emphasis on advice to members, the newsletter, via the "Coop flagship" echoes initiatives and achievements of cooperatives

#### **A NEW PROMOTION AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENT**

In the last quarter of 2009, FECHIMM recruited a Promotion and business development agent, Sylvie Hébert, who took over from Jean-François Gagné, counsellor to the members - products and services, who left the Federation in the Summer.

#### **THE WWW.FECHIMM.COOP CONTINUES ITS PROGRESS**

In 2009, the Federation's website continued to grow as the main tool for information and interaction for members of housing cooperatives and people who are looking for a unit in a housing cooperative in the Greater Montreal area

Available in English since the beginning of 2009, the website registered more than 42,000 visitors during the year, which constitutes an increase of 68 %. The list of electronic mailing at FECHIMM also increased during the year. At the end of 2009, more than 1,500 members received info-emails from FECHIMM.

#### **STATISTICS ON THE VISITORS TO WWW.FECHIMM.COOP**

##### **2008 2009 INCREASE**

25 523 42 376 + 68 %

visits visits

118 569 172 087 + 45 %

pages viewed pages viewed

16 370 25 285 + 54 %

single visitors single visitors

#### **2010 UPCOMING DEVELOPMENTS**

The website of the Federation will continue to occupy an increasingly large place in 2010. The introduction of a video section scheduled for the month of March will allow FECHIMM to better inform its members and the general public about its activities. The Federation will also explore the possibility of opening the site to all its members to enable them to communicate with their members and people seeking a housing unit in a housing cooperative.

#### **LOOKING FOR SPONSORS**

The efforts of the marketing and communications teams at FECHIMM (head of communications and advice to members - products and services) have enabled the Federation to collect a sum of \$ 19,500 in sponsorships in 2009. This amount has reduced the costs of organizing the annual general assembly and the 2009 education symposium.

## **Sustainable Development**

### **Triple assessment of our actions in 2009**

In the wake of the resolution passed at the 2008 AGA promoting the reduction of paper usage, the Board of Directors of the Federation in 2009 adopted its Policy for a green and fair FECHIMM. This policy outlines action to take and goals to reach. More importantly, it inspires and guides when making management decisions in order to optimize whenever possible the Federation's contribution to sustainable development in environmental, economic and social development.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

First item to note, of course: the adoption and implementation of the Policy for a green and fair FECHIMM. But we must also mention the substantial impact, in terms of energy savings and environmental awareness, the realization of the EFFICIENT CO-OPS program.

Another thing worth mentioning : FECHIMM will always try to encourage and promote the use of public transit and this element was crucial in choosing the location of its headquarters in 2006, a stone's throw from the metro Prefontaine. Important also for the choice of venue of its major activities, GA, symposia. Finally, with its partnership with Communauto, FECHIMM wants to encourage car-sharing as a practical and economical alternative limiting the dependence of individuals on the automobile.

In June of 2009, FECHIMM opened an office in Laval, with the GRT Réseau 2000+, a few feet from the Concorde metro station. FECHIMM is also proud of its partnership with the GRT Réseau 2000+, proud to be associated to the LEEDS community housing unit project in Two Mountains in 2009.

We must also mention that FECHIMM supports the composting project of the éco-quartier Sainte-Marie and is now a member of the Conseil régional de l'environnement and of Transport 2000.

## **ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT**

Solidary with the social economy, FECHIMM tends to systematically promote partnerships with cooperatives and social economy enterprises. For example, partnerships with Communauto, Cooptel, the Cooperative de santé globale, Cooperators, Caisse d'économie solidaire and Insertech Angus. With the adoption of the Policy for a green and fair FECHIMM, responsible procurement is namely added to the selection criteria. This concern, already present in monitoring the management of the Investment Group, also extends to our suppliers for bulk purchases such as fair trade coffee.

Moreover, the concept of networking between community kitchens and members of cooperatives has attracted the board of directors who gave its approval, at the end of the year to promote the Community Kitchen of the Grand Plateau and the Collective kitchens group with our members.

## **SOCIAL ASSESSMENT**

Involved in the promotion of cooperation as a way for social, economic and human blossoming, the Federation, through countless acts and decisions made daily, contributes to social development. But its mission requires more than that. The efforts and investments devoted every year to the training and education are reviewed annually and, after an internal reflexion undertaken in 2009, new developments should become clear in 2010.

Also, already since 2008, FECHIMM attempts to incorporate in the ways it does things and intervenes, the added value of empowerment or « enabling ». This project is directly oriented towards the objective of strengthening cooperatives in their capacity to govern themselves wisely, responsibly and that remain viable long term wise.

FECHIMM is also active in promoting social solidarity, for example, by taking part, with the Confédération québécoise des coopératives d'habitation, to the Coalition for the development of cooperative and community housing.

Finally, in a broader international intercooperation, FECHIMM, along with the CQCH, and as part of a SOCODEVI project, agreed to let its executive director take part in two missions supporting the organization of the Senegalese movement of housing cooperatives.