

INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH

MAURICE RICHARD – PRESIDENT - CEO, SOCIÉTÉ DU PARC INDUSTRIEL ET PORTUAIRE DE BÉCANCOUR

Maurice Richard is a public figure, who is well known in the Centre-du-Québec region. Over his career, he was an elected municipal representative for 31 years, 27 of which were spent as the mayor of Ville de Bécancour. He also represented Nicolet-Yamaska riding as a Member of the National Assembly for almost 10 years, sat on the prefecture of the Bécancour regional county municipality for 16 years and, for 9 years, chaired the Conférence régionale des élus du Centre du Québec.

Since 2012, he has been President-CEO of the Société du parc industriel et portuaire de Bécancour, where he works to ensure promoters of a favourable investment climate by welcoming them personally and accompanying them throughout their projects, from beginning to end.



This year, the Société du parc industriel et portuaire de Bécancour is celebrating its 50th anniversary and, to mark the occasion, this month's SODES interview will feature Maurice Richard.

If you were to single out just one thing about the Société du parc industriel et portuaire over these 50 years, what would it be?

«Accompanying promoters is the key factor in ensuring project success.»

Developing large-scale industrial projects such as those being implemented in Bécancour can take 3 to 7 years, depending on the project and context. Over

long periods such as these, project initiators can face numerous challenges. Accompanying them throughout the processes leading to the decision to invest remains the best means of managing external risks.

Be it to obtain agreements with public utilities (energy, railway) or during environmental authorization procedures, the Société du parc industriel et portuaire de Bécancour (SPIPB) accompanies and assists its promoters throughout the entire project file.

Through the determination and flexibility of its board of directors, which is composed of business-people, and the strength of its multidisciplinary team, which is responsive to companies and investors' needs, the Société has forged a reputation as a choice partner for developing industrial and waterfront projects.

What are your organization's priorities and goals for the years to come?

The SPIPB is forward-looking and determined to become a reference in terms of responsible industrial and waterfront development. Optimization of the port's reception capacity and development of new infrastructures will soon be required to meet our clients' needs and ensure the Waterfront Industrial Park's self-financing and growth. A number of projects targeting these goals should be made public in the near future.

Personalized investor accompaniment, which has always been our organization's strength, will evolve to ensure that the sustainable development challenges promoters must work with to meet public expectations and concerns are addressed on an

ongoing basis.

«The SPIPB will use its relationship of trust and transparency vis-à-vis the citizenry to enhance its projects through public participation.»

Such discussions, upstream of each industrial project, will ensure a respectful, constructive dialogue for both the promoter and the citizens and organizations taking part in them.

How does the Société du parc industriel de Bécancour stand out from other sites for implementing industrial projects?

Through the quality of its infrastructures. Our predecessors at the Société had a vision of creating a world-class industrial waterfront park, and the relevance and quality of the infrastructures they built are now the envy of many other industrial sites the world over. Combining these services with the stability and credibility of a government enterprise and an extraordinary location, we get a project implementation climate that is unparalleled in North America.

In recent years, this has become obvious through the many major industrial projects that have chosen Bécancour in their preliminary studies.

«Very few sites on the continent draw so much interest from potential investors for such a wide range of projects. »

Companies working in metallurgy, chemistry, agri-food and even the high-tech sector wish to implement their projects in the Bécancour Waterfront Park due to its unique assets, which are essential to project implementation.

In your opinion, what are the key challenges the Québec marine industry faces?

«Right now, the industry's biggest challenge is definitely to get Quebecers to know more about it.»

Shipping is one of the transport modes with the least impact on the environment and on communities and offers many advantages in the context of free trade. However, the general public knows little

about it. This lack of knowledge is already generating challenges for port development, which will only grow over time.

Fortunately, organizations like SODES and Green Marine are already working to heighten public awareness of the industry and its efforts to limit its impacts, but much remains to be done. Cooperation and the concerted efforts of all industry stakeholders will be necessary.

