

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there are several houses with white and grey roofs, surrounded by trees with autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and green. A road winds through the area. In the background, a wide river flows, with more trees and land visible on the opposite bank.

COMPLIMENTARY ENGLISH TRANSLATION

CADRE D'INTERVENTION POUR LA VITALITÉ DU TERRITOIRE

**FONDS RÉGIONS ET RURALITÉ
2025-2028**

MRC PONTIAC
OUTAOUAIS

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

1. FONDEMENTS DU CADRE D'INTERVENTION	1
Contexte	1
2. VISION STRATÉGIQUE	1
3. FORCES, FAIBLESSES, OPPORTUNITÉS, MENACES	2
4. ENJEUX, PRIORITÉS D'INTERVENTION ET ACTIONS	3
Identification d'enjeux.....	3
Indice de vitalité économique	3
Une population vieillissante	4
Une faible densité sur un vaste territoire	4
Un tissu économique fragile	5
Une base industrielle limitée	5
Réflexion.....	6
5. PRIORITÉS D'INTERVENTION	7
6. MODALITÉS D'APPUI AUX PROJETS	12
Champ d'application	12
ADMISSIBILITÉS	12
Demandeurs.....	12
Projets.....	14
Les dépenses	15
Règles de cumul des aides financières	17
Calcul de la subvention, contribution du promoteur, et modalités de versements	17
Disponibilités des crédits	19
Répartition des crédits	19
Visibilité.....	19
Critères d'analyse des demandes	19
7. SOUTIEN AUX PROJETS	20
Politique de Soutien aux Projets Structurants - PSPS	20
Politique de Soutien aux Entreprises - PSE	21
Politique de soutien aux festivals et grands Événements - PSFGE	22
8. GOUVERNANCE.....	24
Ressource responsable	24
Comité d'analyse des projets	24
Modalités des appels de projets.....	25
Modalités de gestion.....	25
Comment faire une demande	26
9. MÉCANISME DE REDDITION DE COMPTES À LA POPULATION.....	26
Suivi et Évaluation des Retombées des Projets	27
10. INTERPRÉTAION DE LA POLITIQUE	29
11. MISE À JOUR, MODIFICATION ET ÉVOLUTION DU CADRE D'INTERVENTION POUR LA VITALITÉ DU TERRITOIRE	29
ANNEXE A – DÉCLARATION DE CONFORMITÉ	30
ANNEXE B – DIRECTIVES À L'INTENTION DES AGENTS RESPONSABLES DU SUIVI	31



LISTE DES SIGLES ET ACRONYMES

MAMH - Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation

FRR - Fonds régions et ruralité

MRC – Municipalités régionales de comté

NEQ – Numéro d'entreprise de Québec

OBNL – Organisme à but non lucratif

RENA – Registre des entreprises non admissibles aux contrats publics

TVQ – Taxes de vente Québec

TPS – Taxe sur les produits et services

SAD – Schéma d'aménagement et de développement

PSPS - Politique de Soutien aux projets structurants

PSE – Politique de Soutien aux Entreprises

PSFGE - Politique de soutien aux festivals et grands Événements

1. FOUNDATIONS OF THE INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK

Background

The Regions and Ruralty Fund (FRR), of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAMH), is the most important lever for supporting the influence and vitality of the regions throughout Québec. It has been revised to better reflect the realities of local communities and to better meet the needs of the municipal sector. The FRR has a budget of \$277.5 million annually for the next five years and is now made up of five components.

The MRC has been mandated to manage components 2 and 3 to ensure that the investments made on its territory correspond to regional priorities. This responsibility allows us to coordinate funding decisions, monitor the implementation of projects and ensure that program criteria are met, while promoting sustainable and coherent development at the local level.

Component 2 - Territorial Development is the main financial lever for regional county municipalities (MRCs) to enable them to fully act on their development priorities, while respecting their jurisdictions, and from a perspective of territorial vitality. It allows elected officials to follow up on their priorities for intervention by supporting the most promising projects. The implementation of this component is based on a delegation by the Minister of Municipal Affairs of the management of an amount from the FRR to the MRCs.

Component 3 - Vitalization is intended for MRCs in the fifth quintile (Q5) of the 2022 Economic Vitality Index. These areas are usually characterized by a demographic decline, problems related to labour scarcity, a decline in services offered to citizens, and lower property wealth. The MRCs concerned will have to plan specific actions and measures related to the Vitalization component. This planning will allow the targeted territories to better structure their interventions and maximize the benefits that can be derived from the expertise and government measures made available to them.

The Intervention Framework for the Vitality of the Territories (Intervention Framework) is a planning document through which the MRC identifies its issues and determines its priorities for intervention to promote the economic, cultural, social and environmental vitality of its territory. It is at the heart of the management of the sums allocated under components 2 and 3 of the FRR.

2. STRATEGIC VISION

As part of its creation, the Intervention Framework allowed the MRC to adopt an updated vision in order to better meet the needs of its population and to specify the priorities related to the use of the funds it administers. This approach promotes more strategic investments that are better aligned with the needs of the community.

"We imagine a united territory where each community, despite the distance, feels connected and supported. Through collaboration and easy access, we form a diverse, vibrant and inclusive ecosystem where our citizens, municipalities, and businesses help build a prosperous future. »

3. STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Affordable and fertile farmland Excellent value for money – a solid foundation for primary production and agri-food development. Highest photovoltaic potential in Québec An exceptional solar resource, positioning the MRC as a privileged territory for solar energy investments and associated value chains. Resilient and engaged population Strong social capital to mobilize volunteers, partners and local leadership. Heritage and landscapes as tourist assets Cultural values and natural attractions that can support a destination strategy.	Fragile economic fabric Limited diversification and low economic density, reducing capacity to absorb shocks. Limited Industrial Base Restrict the ability to process locally, add value and attract entrenched businesses. Low economic vitality in several municipalities 11 of the 18 municipalities ranked Q5 (lowest quintile), indicating persistent structural difficulties.
OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
Development of processing sectors • Under-exploited agriculture (agri-food, short circuits, processing) • Forestry (by-products, engineered wood, local processing) Seasonal population and second-home residents Focusing on tourism, extended stays and the four-season offer to convert visitors into regular consumers, or even residents. Creation of integrated economy clusters Entrepreneurial opportunities around priority sectors (e.g., agriculture → processing, logistics, agrotourism). Partnership Opportunities • Development of intermunicipal projects • Interregional and intraprovincial collaboration • International twinning with comparable territories for the exchange of know-how and the attraction of investments. Sectoral diversification Agriculture • Tourism • Outdoor activities • Hunting and fishing • Cultural activities.	Aging of the population Reduction in the available workforce, succession challenges (agricultural, SMEs), increased pressure on services. Pockets of low vitality Without intervention, Q5 municipalities risk further decline, population decline, and limiting of services. Structural limitations The fragile economic fabric and weak industrial base with insufficient electrical infrastructure can hinder the attraction and growth of major investments. Low density over a large area: • 14,918 inhabitants on 14,106 km² → one of the least densely populated MRCs in Québec. • Moderate growth (TAAM +1.0% between 2020 and 2024). • Challenges: accessibility to services, infrastructure costs, land use, community development.

4. ISSUES, PRIORITIES FOR INTERVENTION AND ACTIONS

Identification of issues

The combination of a low vitality index, a marked ageing of the population, low density over a large territory, a fragile economic fabric, and a limited industrial base, constitutes a major obstacle to regional socio-economic development. The lack of industries and employment hubs reduces the economic attractiveness of the territory, accelerating the departure of young people and weakening the labour pool necessary to maintain businesses, farms and essential services. At the same time, the growing needs of the aging population are putting increased pressure on health, transportation and community support services, which are particularly difficult to deploy in a context of geographic dispersion. This combination of factors limits the territory's ability to diversify, retain its population and offer accessible and sustainable services. It requires targeted interventions to strengthen employment, improve access to services, and create an enabling environment for youth retention and return to the territory.

Economic vitality index

The Economic Vitality Index (IVE) was developed by the *Institut de la statistique du Québec* for the MAMH with the objective of allowing it to easily evaluate and compare the economic vitality of the territories. Improve the vitality index of municipalities in the MRC Pontiac that are in the fifth quintile (Q5), according to 2022 data, the group with the highest level of deprivation, in order to ensure their sustainability.

The IVE is the result of a statistical calculation composed of the following three indicators:

- Rate of workers aged 25-64
- Median total income of those aged 18 and over
- Average annual population growth rate

In the MRC Pontiac, the municipalities are classified as follows:

MUNICIPALITÉ	(À L'ÉCHELLE DU QUÉBEC)	IVE (2022)	QUINTILE (2022)
Alleyr-et-Cawood	677	-1,1512	Q3
Bristol	713	-1,6095	Q4
Campbell's Bay	1074	-10,8915	Q5
Chichester	953	-6,2366	Q5
Fort-Coulonge	1105	-13,8468	Q5
L'Île-du-Grand-Calumet	967	-6,7076	Q5
Otter Lake	1107	-14,0381	Q5
Portage-du-Fort	1076	-10,9705	Q5
Rapides-des-Joachims	988	-7,2624	Q5
Waltham	1053	-10,037	Q5

¹ <https://statistique.quebec.ca/fr/document/indice-de-vitalite-economique-des-territoires>

MUNICIPALITÉ	(À L'ÉCHELLE DU QUÉBEC)	IVE (2022)	QUINTILE (2022)
Clarendon	539	0,5306	Q3
L'Isle-aux-Allumettes	761	-2,2453	Q4
Mansfield-et-Pontefract	915	-5,1658	Q5
Shawville	824	-3,1862	Q4
Sheenboro			Non déterminé
Thorne	966	-6,6078	Q5
Litchfield	459	0,3572	Q3
Bryson	928	-5,5028	Q5

An ageing population

The population of the Pontiac shows clear signs of demographic aging. In 2024, people aged 65 and over represent 28% of the total population, a proportion that is constantly increasing. At the same time, the share of young people aged 0 to 19 increased from 18% in 2018 to 19.4% in 2024, indicating a slight stabilisation of the younger cohorts. The average age of 51.1 years remains high and reflects a structure dominated by adults aged 20 to 64, who account for 52.5% of the population.

The data show a sustained trend of population aging, due in part to low natural turnover, the migration of young adults to urban centres and longer life expectancy. Although the proportion of young people shows a modest improvement, it is still insufficient to reverse the growing predominance of older age groups. This demographic change is likely to accentuate, in the medium term, pressures on health services, social services and the need for support infrastructure, while posing challenges in terms of succession, manpower and territorial planning.

Low density over a large area

With a population of 14,918 in 2024, the MRC Pontiac is one of the most sparsely populated and least densely populated MRCs in Québec.

The average annual growth rate (AAGR) from 2020 to 2024 is about +1.0%, a moderate growth supported by a population increase from 14,335 to 14,918. The annual variations, ranging from -0.1% to +1.9%, indicate an overall positive increase, but less marked than that observed between 2018 and 2023 (+3%) and contrasting with the decline in 2016-2018 (-2.4%). Despite these fluctuations, the demographic trend remains on the rise².

The territory, which covers 14,106 square kilometres and includes 18 municipalities as well as an unorganized territory, still has characteristics associated with a limited level of development. Despite a slight increase in population growth in recent years—with an average annual growth rate of about +1.0% between 2020 and 2024—the region remains sparsely densified and faces persistent challenges related to access to services, the deployment of basic infrastructure and the development of its development potential. The size of the territory compared to the current capacity for occupation and development highlights the need for concerted strategies aimed at strengthening attractiveness, supporting the vitality of the communities and optimizing the use of available spaces.

² ISQ. Panorama des régions. Édition 2025 (<https://statistique.quebec.ca/fr/fichier/panorama-des-regions-du-quebec-edition-2025.pdf>).

A fragile economic fabric

The current economic fabric of the MRC is characterized by a strong presence of individual businesses and very small organizations, led by committed local entrepreneurs who are deeply rooted in their community. Although these businesses play an essential role in the vitality of the territory, their capacity for growth is sometimes limited due to restricted financial resources, reduced access to specialized training and insufficient technical or strategic support. These realities can hinder their potential for expansion, job creation and attracting skilled labour.

In addition, relatively low levels of post-secondary education, lower household incomes and limited purchasing power influence local economic dynamics, reducing demand for more diversified products and services. This situation makes it more difficult for many companies to mobilize the investments necessary for their development.

Added to these issues is the immediate proximity of the Ontario border, which puts additional pressure on the local economy. This leads to a drain of wealth, including the spending of goods and services outside the territory, the attraction of better-paying jobs across the border, and the migration of skilled workers to more competitive labour markets. This dynamic accentuates the challenges of retaining the workforce, weakens the local entrepreneurial fabric and reduces the volume of activities likely to support internal economic growth.

These factors combined create structural constraints that hinder the region's economic growth, limit job creation and affect its ability to attract new economic activity. Despite these challenges, the entrepreneurial dynamism present in the MRC constitutes a solid foundation on which support, training and accompaniment initiatives can be based to sustainably strengthen local development.

A limited industrial base

The vast territory of the Pontiac presents several constraints that limit its potential for industrial development. One of the major challenges is the available energy capacity, in particular the lack of a reliable and sufficient source of hydroelectricity to support the needs of manufacturing facilities requiring a stable, continuous and high-power supply. This infrastructural weakness reduces the competitiveness of the territory compared to other regions with better essential energy services.

In addition, the region faces a persistent shortage of skilled labour, exacerbated by an aging population and the exodus of young workers to urban areas. This reality limits the ability of companies to fill the specialized positions necessary for their growth and compromises the attraction of new industrial investments.

Finally, any strategy aimed at compensating for these deficits through the immigration of workers comes up against the constraints of the rental market, marked by an insufficient supply of suitable and available housing. This situation restricts the territory's carrying capacity and adds an additional obstacle to economic development.

Together, these structuring issues are slowing down the industrialization of the Pontiac and underscoring the need for strategic investments in energy infrastructure, workforce training and housing development.

Reflexion

The current demographic structure of the Pontiac has significant economic repercussions. The aging of the population, combined with moderate population growth, is contributing to a gradual reduction in the labour force pool, limiting the ability of local businesses to maintain or expand their operations. This situation can hinder investment attraction and reduce regional competitiveness.

In addition, the geographic dispersion of residents over a large territory makes it difficult to make a cost-effective and deploy critical infrastructure, whether transportation, utilities, telecommunications or specialized services. Municipalities and development agencies are faced with higher operating costs, which constrains investment capacity and slows down improvements in services to citizens.

The combination of these factors also puts pressure on public finances. The growing need for services for seniors—health, specialized transportation, community support—is taking up a significant share of resources, even as the base of active taxpayers shrinks.

These dynamics highlight the importance of strategic interventions aimed at attracting and retaining workers, supporting the development of promising economic sectors, improving access to services and strengthening the region's economic autonomy. To remain competitive and ensure the vitality of its communities, the Pontiac must rely on concerted, integrated and structuring actions capable of simultaneously responding to demographic, economic and territorial challenges.

5. Priorities for intervention

PRIORITÉS D'INTERVENTION	ACTIONS PRÉVUES	INDICATRICES ET CIBLES	
Développement territorial – Volet 2			
1. ENERGIZING AND DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL OF THE TERRITORY'S ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM	1.1 Promote coordination between entrepreneurs in the territory. 1.2 Connecting the business community inside and out. 1.3 Develop entrepreneurial skills and mindset at the MRC Pontiac. 1.4 Strengthen local value chains (agricultural, bio-food, cultural, tourism, entrepreneurial, social and environmental sectors). 1.5 Supporting the growth of companies regardless of their life stage.	• Rate of participation of the MRC in activities organized by community stakeholders. • Number of projects involving more than two partners (municipalities, organizations, businesses, etc.). • Number of formal collaborations established between local stakeholders (e.g., municipalities, NPOs, institutions). • Number of training courses offered to entrepreneurs (management, finance, marketing, innovation, etc.). • Conducting an analysis aimed at strengthening a local value chain (agriculture, forestry, tourism, energy, etc.).	• Participate in at least 5 community events per year. • Achieve at least 1 collaborative project per year. • Develop at least 1 intraterritorial collaboration annually. • Offer at least 3 training courses per year. • Complete at least 1 structured analysis of a priority value chain by the end of the year.
2. STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNANCE, PARTNERSHIPS AND THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE TERRITORY	2.1 Encourage intermunicipal projects. 2.2 Strengthen the sense of belonging to the Pontiac. 2.3 Raise awareness, educate and mobilize citizens. 2.4 Provide technical support to local municipalities by MRC Pontiac staff.	• Annual proportion of projects involving multiple municipal partners (with actual resource sharing). • Number of projects involving concrete sharing of resources (financial, human, material, logistical). • Number of information sessions held annually for municipalities, organizations or partners. • Number of formal meetings held with municipal or organizational partners (individual or collective).	• 50% of annual projects must involve at least 2 partners sharing resources. (Note: a letter of support does not constitute a partnership.) • Achieve at least 4 formal partnerships based on the sharing of resources between the parties. • Organize a minimum of 3 information sessions per year. (e.g., calls for projects, funding, collaborative approaches, development tools.) • Hold at least 1 mandatory meeting per partner for each collaborative project; And to ensure at least 12 annual territorial meetings bringing together several partners.

PRIORITÉS D'INTERVENTION	ACTIONS PRÉVUES	INDICATRICES ET CIBLES	
Développement territorial – Volet 2			
3. CULTIVATE AND SOLIDIFY THE MRC'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	3.1 Promote energy efficiency, reduce GHG emissions and optimize waste management. 3.2 Develop projects in sustainable, active and passive mobility. 3.3 Supporting companies in the development of the circular economy. 3.4 Pursue renewable energy projects. 3.5 Promote sustainable residential, commercial and industrial development. 3.6 Promote conservation and sustainable development initiatives.	• Number of arenas supported in the development or preparation of an energy project in collaboration with Hydro-Québec. • Number of formal collaborations established with other MRCs in connection with the study of agricultural water uses or needs. • Number of local waste management initiatives supported or implemented. • Number of promotional actions or campaigns carried out (energy efficiency, GHGs, residual materials). • Number of sustainable mobility projects or initiatives implemented (trails, bicycle parking, public transit, carpooling, etc.) • Number of circular initiatives implemented (pooling, reuse, process improvements). • Number of tools, guides or campaigns to promote sustainable development produced.	• Support at least 2 arenas per year in defining or submitting a project to HQ. • Actively participate in at least one inter-MRC study on updated groundwater data. • Support at least 5 organizations or companies per year in energy optimization or waste reduction processes. • Carry out at least 2 awareness or information campaigns. • Implement at least 1 sustainable mobility project. • Support the implementation of at least 2 circular initiatives. • Produce at least 1 tool (guide, brochure, information capsule) per year on sustainable development.

PRIORITÉS D'INTERVENTION	ACTIONS PRÉVUES	INDICATRICES ET CIBLES	
Développement territorial – Volet 2			
4.STRENGTHENING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE REGION AROUND OUR STRATEGIC ASSETS	4.1 Identify and analyze priority strategic assets to be developed. 4.2 Stimulate the economic attractiveness of investments and partners who have projects adapted to the realities of the territory. - Actively co-construct projects and initiatives that influence and strengthen the development of the territory 4.3 Supporting the attractiveness of the workforce. 4.4 Strengthening the Enhancement of Culture and Heritage - Implementation of cultural policy. 4.5 To make improvements in the community living environment (i.e., housing, services, public facilities, etc.). - Draw up a list of public services found in the territory. - List the priority needs for public services. 4.6 Enhance physical aspects (i.e., available services; environmental conservation areas; health, safety and accessibility of a building). 4.7 Implement the development plan for the agricultural zone. - Corroborate the territorial attractiveness for agricultural entrepreneurship and access to land 4.8 Supporting tourist attractiveness - Create and implement the tourism action plan. 4.9 Collaborate in the development of the actions that will constitute the land use and development plan.	- Progress in the analysis aimed at the creation or structuring of a Regional Park. - Number of new partners identified or engaged in territorial projects. - Production of a tool to promote the general attractiveness of the territory (e.g., brochure, web platform, video, interactive map). - Number of hectares or parcels of fallow land reintegrated into production or recovered. - Number of PDZA actions implemented annually. - The development of a study of fallow land. - Number of cultural policy actions implemented. - Development and adoption of a tourism action plan. - Level of design and finalization of the industrial attractiveness tool (links with local value chains). - Number of improvements to public services. - Number of tourism actions implemented. - Participation in meetings planned by the development committee. - Number of collaborations with partners (municipalities, NPOs, businesses, citizens).	- Perform and submit a complete analysis (opportunities, costs, governance, partners) before the end of the year. - Find at least 1 new partner per year. - Forecast, design and deploy at least one attractiveness tool by the end of year 2. - Produce a study of fallow lands. - Reduce the number of fallow lands (target to be specified based on available data: e.g., 5% per year or X hectares/year). - Implement at least 10 to 12 PDZA actions of the 6 projects to be carried out. - Implement at least 15 cultural policy actions for 10 projects carried out. - Produce and adopt a comprehensive tourism action plan in the first year. - Finalise the industrial attractiveness tool focused on value chains by the end of the year. - Add or improve at least 1 public service per year. - Implement at least 5 actions of the tourism plan per year. - Support at least 6 municipalities in the integration of the guidelines and standards of the plan. - Co-construct at least 3 structuring projects. - Minimum of 3 to 5 thematic workshops per year, according to the SAD schedule.

PRIORITÉS D'INTERVENTION	ACTIONS PRÉVUES	INDICATRICES ET CIBLES	
Vitalisation – Volet 3			
1. DEVELOPING OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE TERRITORIAL VITALIZATION	1.1 Explore the educational needs in the territory. 1.2 Work on transportations issues. 1.3 Explore the needs in culture, sport and leisure. 1.4 Create and implement a sports and recreation action plan. 1.5 Supporting mental health services in the territory.	• Number of consultations carried out (meetings, workshops, surveys). • Number of schools and community stakeholders consulted (school service centres, institutions, organizations, parents, youth). • Rates of territorial coverage of consultations (number of municipalities covered). • Production of the needs diagnosis (deliverable document). • Number of priorities and courses of action identified. • Number of structuring educational pilot projects proposed. • Production of a mobility diagnosis (supply, demand, gaps, costs). • Creation and adoption of the sport-leisure action plan. • Number of sports or recreational actions carried out. • Rates of participation of the population in supported activities (evolution). • Number of beneficiaries supported in the territory.	• Produce and submit a need diagnosis by the end of year 2. • Identify ≥ 5 priorities and ≥ 3 pilot projects that can be carried out at 12-18 months. • Complete a mobility diagnosis. • Submit a minimum of 1 funding application and enter into ≥3 partnerships. • Create and adopt the sport-recreation plan in the first year. • Implement at least 4 actions per year of the sports and recreation plan. • Develop at least 2 municipal or community collaborations. • Increase participation by +10% on targeted activities. • Carry out ≥ 2 infrastructure or access projects (e.g., municipal parks, trails, etc.) per year.

PRIORITÉS D'INTERVENTION	ACTIONS PRÉVUES	INDICATRICES ET CIBLES	
Vitalisation – Volet 3			
2. INVIGORATING COMMUNITY SOCIAL LIFE AND BREAKING SOCIAL ISOLATION	2.1 Centralize information on social services throughout the Pontiac. 2.2 Find and implement a means of communication adapted to our reality. 2.3 Encourage actions from the community and stakeholders in the territory.	- Existence and online publication of a centralized calendar (website or platform). - Number of organizations and partners that contribute to the project. - Number of events or services registered monthly. - Number of views/visits to the agenda. - Carrying out a diagnosis of communication needs (networks, Internet access, languages, adapted tools). - Number of communication tools or channels deployed (newsletter, SMS, community display, social networks, local radio). - Citizen reach and engagement rates (subscriptions, openness, interactions). - Number of municipalities and organizations using the chosen means of communication	- Create and upload a centralized calendar by the end of year 2. - Have at least 10 Pontiac organizations participate in the first year. - Reach ≥ 10 registered activities/services per month after one year. - Complete a communication diagnosis within 1 year. - Deploy 1 new main tool (e.g., platform, SMS system, territorial newsletter) in year 1. - Obtain ≥ 100 subscribers or users in the first year. - Ensure the use of the tool by ≥ 10 municipalities and ≥ 5 organizations.
3. IMPROVE SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE (OUTDOORS, SPORTS AND RECREATION, CULTURE)	3.1 Encouraging multi-partner projects in the Pontiac 3.2 Prioritize projects that target a plurality of Pontiac communities 3.3 Make improvements to the community living environment (i.e., community infrastructure, public facilities, urban development and green spaces).	- Number of citizens or community initiatives supported annually. - Number of support tools provided (workshops, guides, advice meetings). - Number of partnerships created or consolidated around local initiatives. - Launch of calls for local projects.	- Support at least 6 community initiatives per year. - Organize 2 support workshops for project leaders. - Create or strengthen 5 annual partnerships with local actors.

6. PROJECT SUPPORT MECHANISMS

The Economic Development Department of the MRC Pontiac offers financial opportunities, the amounts of which are managed by this framework, in order to support the growth of our local economies and improve the quality of life of its residents through the development of its services and infrastructure, supported by its non-profit organizations and municipal entities located on its territory.

Scope

The MRC Pontiac allocates the portion of the fund delegated to it by the Minister of Municipal Affairs to any local development and vitalization measures taken by the MRC Pontiac under the agreement. These measures should focus on the following areas of intervention:

Component 2 - Territorial Development

- Economic vitality;
- Cultural dynamism;
- Social development;
- Environmental protection;
- Rurality;
- The dwelling;
- Support for local municipalities;
- Improvement of living environments;
- Heritage enhancement;
- Land use planning and development.

Component 3 - Vitalization

- Animation and mobilization of the community;
- Consolidation of local services;
- Urban development and green spaces;
- Collective living space.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants

The following table identifies eligible and ineligible applicants.

However, it should be noted that each of the eligible beneficiaries must be legally constituted. Its head office must be located in the province of Québec. The beneficiary must also be registered with the Registre des entreprises du Québec (NEQ) and their status must be up to date.

All eligible applicants must reside in Québec and carry out their activities on the territory of the MRC Pontiac.

The MRC can benefit from a grant for the realization of a project related to a priority. The MRC is then considered an eligible applicant within the meaning of these rules and standards and is subject to them as such.



DEMANDEURS ADMISSIBLES	DEMANDEURS NON ADMISSIBLES
• A local municipality; • An MRC; • An indigenous community ; • A cooperative; • A non-profit organization or association; • Institutions in the health and education sectors are eligible only when their project generates benefits that go beyond their usual services and benefit the community as a whole; • A for-profit company with a Québec enterprise number (NEQ), with facilities on the territory of the MRC Pontiac and those wishing to establish themselves there; (not eligible for Component 3 - Vitalization).	• Private companies in the financial sector, including financial cooperatives and financial planners, as well as insurance and real estate brokerage firms; • Applicants who, in the last two years prior to the submission of an application for financial assistance, have failed to comply with their obligation to provide previous financial assistance by a granting department or agency, after having been duly notified; • Natural persons, not in business; • Applicants registered with the RENA; • Applicants who, during the two years preceding the grant application, have failed to meet their obligations after having been duly given formal notice to do so in connection with the granting of previous financial assistance by the MRC Pontiac or the Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation; • Plaintiffs who are placed under the protection of the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. C-36) or the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. B-3); • Organizations of a sexual, religious, political nature or any other business whose activities are controversial and with which it would be unreasonable to associate the name of the MRC Pontiac, are excluded; • Departments, agencies, Crown corporations and their subsidiaries, as well as any other corporation or enterprise controlled directly or indirectly by a government (provincial or federal); • The health care institutions referred to in section 79 of the Act respecting health services and social services (CQLR, chapter S-4.2): ○ local community service centres, ○ hospitals, ○ child and youth protection centres, ○ residential and long-term care centres, ○ rehabilitation centres; • Hospital foundations, health cooperatives, and private or public health care clinics; • Educational institutions, including schools, school service centres, CEGEPs and universities and their associated organizations; • The following non-profit organizations whose actions are not akin to community action, such as ○ foundations, ○ professional orders and labour or political organizations, ○ religious organizations, ○ bodies created by a public body to meet the interests of public administration.

For the vitalization component only: It is not essential that a project be carried out in a Q5 municipality, as long as it has an impact on a Q5 municipality. Nevertheless, considering that Q5 municipalities face greater vitalization challenges, the result sought by component 3 is to improve the vitalization of these territories more specifically. The MRC must ensure that projects are carried out there.

Projets

The same project cannot be financed twice. However, several phases of the project can be financed, provided that the progress of the results is justified.

Projects that create unfair competition, or that do not comply with the laws and regulations in force in Québec or municipal by-laws, are not eligible.

The following table defines the eligibility rules for projects:

PROJETS ADMISSIBLES	PROJETS NON ADMISSIBLES
Les Eligible projects are those that must: • Contribute to the achievement of the objectives of component 2 or component 3 and the priorities defined in the MRC's Intervention Framework and be part of one of the areas of intervention; • Be of a limited duration, of a one-time and non-recurring nature, and not include the ongoing expenses of the grantee; • Comply with laws and regulations, particularly any provisions establishing municipal jurisdictions.	• Projects that do not contribute to the achievement of the objectives of component 2 or component 3 or the intervention priorities described in the MRC's Intervention Framework; • Projects in the field of restoration; • Projects in the retail sector, with the exception of a project by a local business that is not eligible for the Local Businesses component of the FRR; • Projects related to places of worship, except if they concern a vocation other than religious 2; • <u>Projects to ensure the day-to-day operation of the applicant organization</u>, such as fees: • Insurance; ○ Banking and interest; ○ Debt financing, loan repayment or working capital replenishment; ○ Maintenance of premises; ○ Depreciation of real estate assets; ○ Representation; ○ Training; ○ Membership fees; • Projects already carried out by the promoter; • Consolidation projects; • Public safety projects; • The projects do not generate any spin-offs on its territory.



Expenses

Expenses must be made within the MRC Pontiac, or at least in the province of Québec. If the material or professional resource (services) is not available in the MRC or the province, these purchases may be made outside the province of Québec and must be the subject of a prior agreement with an economic development commissioner of the MRC Pontiac.

The following table identifies eligible and ineligible expenses:

DÉPENSES ADMISSIBLES	DÉPENSES NON ADMISSIBLES
Eligible expenses are: - Expenses directly related to the delivery of the project (e.g., land purchase, salaries and benefits, rent, travel expenses , data acquisition, materials and equipment); - Expenses for the preparation of plans and studies for businesses already established on the territory of the MRC Pontiac (salaries and benefits, fees for professional services or other contractual services) relating to: - The realization of a business plan, - Assessing the appropriateness of a project, including market analysis of a project - Assessing the technical and financial feasibility of a project, - The definition and development of a concept, - The programming of activities, - The development and development of instruments or indicators to better measure a sector of activity, including ridership and economic impact studies related to projects; - The costs of construction, development, implementation or implementation of the project, where relevant to the project; - Costs related to the completion of a planning and collaborative process involving a set of regional stakeholders (salaries and benefits, fees for professional services or other contractual services); - Taxes that are not refundable by a government. - For private companies, no tax will be refundable, except for small businesses with a threshold below \$30,000 and which submits, in writing from their accountant, a confirmation that they are not claiming (these taxes).	Expenses that are not eligible include: - Expenses incurred by the applicant prior to the submission of their grant application ; - Expenses related to projects already completed; - Funding of scholarships, prizes or competitions; - Any form of loan, loan guarantee or equity investment; - An eligible organization's operating deficit, interest costs, loan repayments or working capital replenishments; - Expenses for the relocation of a business or part of its production outside the local municipality where it is established; - Expenses related to the day-to-day management of the organization, such as expenses: - Insurance; - Banking and interest; - Debt financing, loan repayment or working capital replenishment; - Maintenance of premises; - Depreciation of real estate assets; - Representation; - Training; - Membership fees ; - Expenses related to activities governed by budgetary rules approved by the Government of Québec;

⁴ Ne dépassant pas les barèmes applicables pour les emplois similaires dans la fonction publique québécoise.

⁵ Ne dépassant pas les barèmes en vigueur dans la fonction publique québécoise.

⁶ Excluant les équipements roulants.



DÉPENSES ADMISSIBLES	DÉPENSES NON ADMISSIBLES
	• The portion of the sales tax on goods and services that the applicant may be reimbursed; • Expenses that are not directly related to the project; • Severance pay; • Lobbying expenses, within the meaning of sections 26 and 27 of the Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Act (chapter T-11.011); • Legal fees, including those related to civil or criminal charges involving the personal liability of the officers or staff of the grantees; • Expenses, including as a subcontractor, for the benefit of any entity that is registered with the RENA or that has failed to comply with its obligations after having been duly given formal notice in connection with the granting of previous financial assistance by a government department or agency of the Government of Québec; • Any purchase between individuals, such as via Facebook, Kijiji, etc.; • Expenses for decontamination, construction, renovation or conversion of housing units (under Component 3 - Vitalization only); • For component 3, expenses whose purpose is to ensure the regular operation of the applicant, with the exception of a non-profit organization in a precarious financial situation and whose project aims to develop an action plan to sustain its activities; however, the latter must be accompanied in this process by the MRC or any other competent organization.

Rules for cumulating financial aid

With the exception of the MRC's contribution to a sectoral development agreement, any contribution from components 2 and 3 to a project is considered a government contribution.

The calculation of the cumulative amount of direct or indirect financial assistance received from departments, agencies and Crown corporations of the governments of Québec and Canada, including tax credits, as well as from municipal entities that are not direct beneficiaries of the program, must not exceed the following rates:

- Structuring expenses and projects of the MRC to develop and implement the Intervention Framework: 100% of eligible expenses;
- Projects by for-profit companies: 70% of eligible expenses; however, Local Investment Fund (FLI) loans from the Ministry of the Economy, Innovation and Energy (MEIE) may be added to the maximum cumulative rate of 70% of the financial assistance provided for private companies, not exceeding an absolute accumulation rate of 100% of eligible expenses;
- Funding from the Local Solidarity Funds is recorded as a private contribution;
- Projects by NPOs, municipalities or cooperatives: 95% of eligible expenses, with the exception of intermunicipal projects that benefit from 100% total;
- Projects from other applicants, such as institutions in the health and education sectors, are eligible only when their project generates benefits that go beyond their usual services and benefit the community as a whole: 90% of eligible expenses

For the purposes of the rules for calculating the stacking rate, all forms of financial assistance granted by a public body must be calculated at 100% of their value, whether they are repayable or not.

The expenses must be made according to the terms and conditions described in the financial assistance agreement that will be signed between the developer and the MRC Pontiac. The financial capacity of the promoter to carry out his project will be decisive in the granting of a subsidy.

Calculation of the grant, promoter's contribution, and terms of payment

When the project is packaged, the applicant's contribution to eligible expenses must be financial.

Exceptionally, when it is demonstrated that a financial contribution cannot be provided by the applicant when there is no own-source revenue, the in-kind contribution of an applicant, which is a non-profit organization or a cooperative, may be considered as an eligible expense.

The non-financial contribution corresponds to the involvement of human resources or the use of goods or merchandise necessary for the realization of the project, and to which a monetary value is assigned. A demonstration of the fair market value of the in-kind contribution may be required if there is no supporting documentation to determine the actual dollar value of the contribution, if any.

The intervention framework is an integral part of the FRR. In this sense, the non-repayable contribution from this fund is considered to be of a governmental nature **and not** as part of the promoter's down payment.

The assistance granted to a **for-profit industrial or commercial enterprise**, in its entirety, may not exceed \$150,000 in grants at any time within a period of 12 consecutive months.

Similarly, a promoter who has already received a grant can only reapply after completing the project.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Terms & conditions	Soutien aux projets Volet 2 - Développement territorial	Soutien aux projets Volet 3 - vitalisation
Maximum financial assistance	\$500,000 per project for the duration of the agreement	250 000 \$ par projet pour la durée de l'entente
Maximum subsidy rate	100% of the MRC's expenses; 50% of eligible expenses for for-profit businesses; and 90% of eligible expenditures for all other eligible organizations.	Non-eligible for-profit business; 100% of the MRC's expenses; and 90% of expenses for other eligible organizations
Rule on the accumulation of financial aid	100% of eligible expenses for the MRC or an intermunicipal project; 70% of eligible expenses for for-profit businesses; 95% of expenses for NPOs, municipalities and cooperatives; 90% of eligible expenditures for all other eligible organizations.	Non-eligible for-profit business; 100% of eligible expenses for the MRC or an intermunicipal project; 95% of expenses for NPOs, municipalities and cooperatives 90% of eligible expenditures for all other eligible organizations.
Participation in a sectoral development agreement	Maximum of \$1,000,000 for the duration of the agreement	Non admissible
Maximum financial assistance for an industrial or commercial establishment	Maximum of \$150,000 within a period of 12 consecutive months	Non admissible
Promoters contribution	Financial contribution only, with the exception of NPOs and cooperatives	Financial contribution only, with the exception of NPOs and cooperatives
Payment	Maximum of 3 payments: <u>First instalment:</u> 40% of the total subsidy as an advance of funds upon the signature of the financial aid agreement; <u>Second instalment:</u> 40% of the total subsidy upon presentation of invoices and proof of payment equivalent or more to the first instalment;	Maximum of 3 payments: <u>First instalment:</u> 40% of the total subsidy as an advance of funds upon the signature of the financial aid agreement; <u>Second instalment:</u> 40% of the total subsidy upon presentation of invoices and proof of payment equivalent or more to the first instalment;
	<u>Third instalment:</u> 20% of the total grant when the project is completed in accordance with the terms set out in the financial assistance agreement.	<u>Third instalment:</u> 20% of the total grant when the project is completed in accordance with the terms set out in the financial assistance agreement.



Availability of credits

Any financial commitment is only valid if there is a sufficient balance of available credits in the fund to charge the expenditure and according to the amounts made available to the MRC by the MAMH under the FRR component 2 and component 3.

Distribution of appropriations

The available credits will be allocated in four (4) separate and distinct ways:

Option 1: MRC development projects, including sectoral development agreements. For which the council of mayors will have the power to accept or reject projects submitted for funding, which is in line with the priorities determined in this intervention framework.

Option 2: Calls for projects. With the help of an applicant's guide, which clearly defines the sector to be developed, which will be presented at the opening of a call for projects on the territory of the MRC Pontiac.

Option 3: Entrepreneurial and industrial development projects. For these projects, the promoter will work with one of Accès PME's advisors to develop a well-structured proposal. This proposal will be examined by the MRC's investment committee and requires the approval of the council of mayors. These projects must reflect the priorities set by the Board and be consistent with this policy. - This option is not eligible for component 3.

Option 4: MRC expenditures related to the development and implementation of the Intervention Framework. This section supports the expenses that the MRC may incur in the development and implementation of the Intervention Framework.

The allocation of funds is intended to ensure a clear investment that aligns with the priorities and areas of focus identified by the Council of Mayors.

Visibility

The promoter who receives financial assistance is required to integrate the Government of Québec with the MRC Pontiac in the realization of its public visibility actions.

Visibility clauses will be described in the applicant guides, in the financial assistance agreement signed and reviewed with a representative of the economic development department at the time of signing.

Application Analysis Criteria

Once the project is **deemed admissible and eligible**, the economic development team will analyze your funding application, evaluating both **your project and your profile**, based on the following criteria:

- Alignment of your project with:
 - The objectives of component 2 or component 3 of the FRR from the ministère des Affaires municipales et d'habitation.
 - Regional priorities of the MRC Pontiac
- **Relevance** of the project: does the product or service produced meet a real need on the Pontiac territory? Is there a sufficient clientele to justify its launch?
- **Realism** of the project: existence of an action plan and an implementation schedule, reliable and committed partners (suppliers, distributors, subcontractors, etc.);



- **Economic viability** of the project: its ability to generate revenue and create growth (financial profitability for private companies and social profitability for other organizations);
- **Impact** of the project on the Pontiac region: generating economic benefits (positive or negative influence on other sectors or businesses in the region, strengthening local value chains, etc.), social benefits (creating or maintaining jobs), environmental benefits (respecting the principles of sustainable development and aligning with the MRC's climate plan);
- **Competition**: the project must not represent direct competition with Pontiac companies;
- **Innovation and originality** : the existence of an innovative and original character of the project, far from the forms of traditional business models that are not very solid and do not create much regional value;
- **Profile** of the promoter/entrepreneur: their experience, expertise, training, knowledge, management skills;
- **Financial and tax situation** of the promoter: The contractor or the applicant organization must not be in default of payment of government debts and must be free of any bankruptcy judgment;
- **The company's capital structure** : the promoter must hold a minimum of 25% of the company's capital;
- **Completeness** of the financial package: the promoter must demonstrate that all the financing required for the project has been completed:
 - His own financial contribution/down payment,
 - A preference for the involvement of other sources of funding.

Once analyzed, the request will be forwarded to the analysis committees. They are free to recommend or not their interest in investing in a project, as a whole or in making certain expenses eligible, if they believe that the project will generate economic benefits or have a significant impact on economic diversification and its potential for job creation.

7. PROJECT SUPPORT

There are three types of supported projects.

Politique de Soutien aux Projets Structurants - PSPS

The selected projects must make a demonstrable contribution to local and regional development. They will also need to meet the following criteria:

Nature of the projet

Projects must fall within the priority fields of application defined in Section 6 and meet one (1) of the MRC Pontiac's intervention priorities defined in Section 5.

Job creation and economic benefits

The primary investment criterion is job creation. At a minimum, the projects must contribute to job preservation. If the projects do not create jobs, they must generate significant economic benefits, in particular through contracts with companies in the MRC Pontiac.

Needs in the Environments and Revitalization

Projects must contribute to the revitalization of living environments by responding to needs that are clearly identified and expressed at different levels by communities or by referring to existing policies (e.g., cultural policies, agricultural zone development plan, family policies, local action plan, etc.).

Developer's experience and investment capacity

The promoter will be required to demonstrate knowledge and skills to carry out a development project, as well as a commitment to invest financially in the project.

Authorizations and permits are required to carry out the project

The promoter must conduct due diligence by obtaining all required information and permits from the relevant authorities to carry out their project. A form, provided by the MRC (see Appendix A), is provided to attest whether certain permits are required or not. This must be provided during the application process and anticipated if there are any fees related to obtaining the required permits and/or authorizations in the project budget.

During a call for projects

Any financial commitment is only valid if there is a sufficient balance of available credits in the fund to charge the expenditure and according to the amounts made available to the MRC by the MAMH.

As part of the **FRR Component 2**, the MRC Pontiac has allocated an annual budget of **\$200,000** which will be distributed as part of a call for projects.

As part of the **FRR Component 3**, the MRC Pontiac has allocated an annual budget of **\$500,000** which will be distributed as part of a call for projects.

The dates and duration of the call for projects will be set as necessary and submitted to the Council of Mayors for prior approval before any public announcement.

Politique de Soutien aux Entreprises – PSE

PSE projects aim to meet two major challenges for the development and sustainability of companies:

- To energize entrepreneurship through the encouragement of the **creation, development, restructuring and installation of businesses** within the Pontiac territory;
- **Increase their chances of success and stabilize their long-term retention** throughout the MRC Pontiac.

The MRC Pontiac's Economic Development Department provides **technical and financial support covering the entire entrepreneur's journey**. From the idea to the launch, and from growth to the transfer of the company to buyers.

We offer a wide range of front-line services to help start, consolidate, develop and transfer a business project. These services include, but are not limited to:

- Consultation and guidance;
- Support in the development of a business plan;
- Support for entrepreneurship training;
- Support in finding funding;
- Support for expansion and implementation;
- Financial assistance;

- Inter-partner referral;
- File reviews;
- Reference to specialized services, particularly in the areas of export, technological development or services offered by specialized organizations such as Investissement Québec (IQ) and the Coopérative de développement régional Outaouais/Laurentides (CDROL).

During a call for projects

Any financial commitment is valid only if there is a sufficient balance of available credits in the fund to charge the expenditure and according to the amounts made available to the MRC by the MAMH under the **FRR component 2**. In this regard, the MRC Pontiac has allocated an annual budget of **\$350,000** that will be distributed as part of the calls for projects.

The dates and duration of the call for projects will be set as necessary and submitted to the Council of Mayors for prior approval before any public announcement.

Politique de soutien aux festivals et grands Événements – PSFGE

The PSFGE fund is developed to promote the implementation of initiatives leading to support events and festivals held on the territory of the MRC Pontiac and to be based on the following principles:

Générer des retombées économiques locales durables

Support initiatives that create or maintain jobs, encourage local consumption and attract new visitors.

Stimulating the cultural and tourism vitality of the Pontiac

Promote the development of large-scale events that strengthen the cultural identity, sense of belonging and regional influence of the territory.

Encouraging consultation and territorial partnership

Promote collaboration between municipalities, organizations and businesses in order to pool resources and increase the collective impact of events.

Improving quality of life and civic participation

Support projects that revitalize living environments, promote community participation and contribute to the vitalization of the territory.

Ensuring sustainable and inclusive event development

Support initiatives that are environmentally friendly, accessible and integrated into a territorial development approach consistent with the MRC's priorities.

Eligible events are classified according to their territorial scope and coverage as follows suit:

Major large-scale and structuring event

Maximum that can be requested: \$10,000

Must be sanctioned by the federation of the activity concerned, and holder of the rights to the event. This category is for an event or festival with a regional influence that has existed for at least one (1) year. To be qualified as structuring, an event or festival must have an impact on more than one activity. The program must last at least three (3) days and be organized according to a theme that attracts a significant number of residents from the MRC, regional and even provincial territory. The activity must demonstrate significant benefits. It must demonstrate that it **has a minimum of 10,000 people or more**. Proof of traffic is required.



Medium-sized and structuring event in expansion

Maximum that can be requested: 5,000 \$

Must be sanctioned by the federation of the activity concerned, and holder of the rights to the event. This category is for an emerging event or festival with a regional reach that has been in existence for at least one (1) year. To be qualified as structuring, an event or festival must have an impact on more than one activity. The program must last at least 2 days and be organized according to a theme. It attracts participants from several regions and promotes the Pontiac notoriety. It must demonstrate that it has a minimum of **1,000 or more people in attendance**.

Regional Event

Maximum that can be requested: \$2,000

Must gather a **minimum of 500 participants**. This category is intended for an event or festival of local, MRC or regional scope that has been in existence for at least one (1) year. The program of the activity lasts at least one (1) day and is organized according to a theme that attracts a significant number of Pontiac residents, but which contributes to generating a certain amount of tourist traffic in the MRC.

Local event

Maximum that can be requested: \$1,000

Must reach between **50-100 participants** from **more than one municipality** in the MRC Pontiac territory. These events contribute to the animation of the living environment, community cohesion and the dynamism of rural municipalities. This category is intended for short-term activities that attract a significant number of residents from the local community and the MRC. The event or festival must be recurring in nature and based on a specific non-generic theme.

Note: These types of funding are not intended for municipal winter carnivals, celebrations of Québec's national holiday (St-Jean-Baptiste) or Canada Day.

Principles

- Editions of eligible events must be one-time and time-limited; Each edition is considered a separate project and must be the subject of a new funding application for the year in question.
- The MRC cannot be the sole funder of the event;
- This policy cannot be combined with any other request for funds available from the MRC Pontiac;
- The nominee's event must not be associated with religious, political, or morally questionable values and/or causes that elicit public opinion.
- Agreements entered into must in no way constitute a commitment for the future or affect, explicitly or implicitly, the conduct of the day-to-day affairs of the MRC;
- The relationship created under an agreement must not allow an employee of the MRC or an elected official to receive goods, services or assets for his or her personal use or gain.

During a call for projects

Any financial commitment is valid only if there is a sufficient balance of available credits in the fund to charge the expenditure and according to the amounts made available to the MRC by the MAMH under the **FRR component 2**. In this regard, the MRC Pontiac has allocated an **annual budget of \$40,000** that will be distributed as part of the calls for projects.

A call for projects will be launched annually, **between the months of September and October, for events planned during the following calendar year.**

8. GOVERNANCE

Responsible resource

The MRC Pontiac has assigned the socio-economic development coordinator to be responsible for vitalization. Its role will be to ensure the implementation of the intervention framework for the vitality of the territory with regard to the challenges of vitalization.

The resource will also be in charge of managing the calls for projects of component 2 and component 3 and ensuring their follow-up in collaboration with the MRC's economic development team.

Project Analysis Committee

The MRC's council of mayors will provide governance for components 2 and 3.

An analysis committee makes recommendations to the MRC's Council of Mayors regarding the acceptance or rejection of a project, as well as the amount granted and the conditions, if applicable.

There will be two (2) committees formed for the analysis of projects, depending on the applicants.

Investment Committee - for the analysis of entrepreneurial and social economy projects will be made up of:

- 1 representative designated by FLS-FTQ;
- 1 representative among the elected representatives of the MRC;
- 5 representatives from the local socio-economic environment, preferably in the tourism, commercial and industrial, forestry or socio-community sectors. At least one of these members must be from the private sector.
- 1 representative of the MRC;
- 1 representative of the most populous city;
- 2 people from private companies located on the territory of the MRC;
- 1 representative of the economic organisation of the territory.

Support Committee - for the analysis of the projects for other eligible recipients will be composed of:

- 6 representatives among the elected officials of the MRC
- 1 representative of NPOs
- 1 citizen representative
- 1 representative of a regional organization

In order to avoid conflicts of interest, a committee member with a personal interest in a project must declare this and must exclude himself or herself from the analysis of the file. Thus, an elected official will have to withdraw during the analysis of a project submitted by their municipality. In addition, if a mayor sits on the board of directors of a non-profit organization that has submitted a project, he or she must also declare his or her conflict of interest and withdraw from any discussion or decision regarding that project. However, the submission of a project by a business or NPO located on the territory of the elected official's municipality, of which he or she is not a member, does not, in itself, require its exclusion from the decision-making process.

Terms and conditions of calls for projects

The steps of applying for financial assistance:

- Opening of the file with the economic development department; or the Accès PME advisors of the MRC Pontiac in the case of private companies (component 2 only);
- Verification of applicant and project eligibility;
- Analysis of the application: the complete file (all the documents submitted by the applicant)
 - Business plan analysis (for businesses, eligible for Component 2 only);
 - Analysis of supporting documents (quotes, authorisations, bank documents, etc.);
- Determination of the possible amount of the subsidy;
- Presentation of the file to the Investment Committee or the Analysis Committee;
- Decision of the committee and recommendation to the Regional Council of the MRC;
- Decision of the Regional Council of the MRC;
- Understanding of the terms of program management and signing of the contract between the beneficiary and the MRC;
- Execution of the project, as presented and analysed by the committee;
- Submission of a final report with financial statements, invoices and proof of payment to the MRC;
- Follow-up of the file by the MRC development team.

The promoter is informed of the decision after the Regional Council meeting. All requests for financial assistance are processed in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Good Conduct of the MRC Pontiac Committees.

Management methods

- The MRC will launch a call for projects specifying:
 - ✓ The composition of the funding application file
 - ✓ The period of the call for projects
 - ✓ Precise investment criteria
 - ✓ How to submit to the program
 - ✓ Project selection criteria



- Once the file has been accepted for a recommendation for funding by the committee and confirmed by resolution by the Regional Council, a notification letter will be sent to the promoter, who has 30 days to sign his contract and twelve (12) months from the date of the signature of the latter to carry out their project;
- The promoter must comply with the terms and conditions set out in the contract;
- The project must be carried out as presented and analysed by the committee;
- The promoter must provide invoices for the full amount of the project submitted. In the event of a change, the promoter must explain the changes that have occurred in the project. The committee may have to adjust the amounts that will be awarded.

How to apply

The promoter must make an appointment with either a business advisor from the Accès PME network (for for-profit businesses) or an economic development commissioner of the MRC (for all other applicants), who will provide the necessary follow-up and support for the development of their application. An incomplete file will not be analyzed.

9. PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM

As part of the Territorial Development Agreement, the MRC is responsible for monitoring the progress of supported projects and producing the required result indicators. Each year, we compile and transmit, through an electronic form, all the reporting data to the MAMH. This information includes, in particular, the expenditures associated with the Intervention Framework, the projects supported by the MRC and the sectoral development agreements carried out during the reference year.

The MRC is also required to produce an annual activity report, to make it public on its website and to send it to the MAMH. This report must represent the use of the share of the FRR managed by the MRC, as well as the results obtained during the fiscal year.

In this regard, the report must include a review of the activities carried out by the MRC in connection with the development and support for the implementation of the intervention framework for the vitality of the territory, as well as a detailed financial report for components 2 (Territorial Development) and 3 (Vitalization).

The information contained in this report presents a detailed financial statement for each of the following areas:

Component 2 — Territorial development:

Balance carried over from the previous year;

Interest earned in the reference year;

Amounts committed, amounts paid and balances to be paid;

Administrative expenses.

Volet 3 Component 3 — Vitalization:

Balance carried over from the previous year;

Interest earned in the reference year;

Amounts committed, amounts paid and balances to be paid;

Administrative expenses.

It must also present details of the expenses associated with the implementation of the intervention framework—including the professional resources mobilized, the fees contracted, and the consultation actions carried out—as well as the list of funded projects and sectoral agreements concluded or maintained during the reference year, along with the relevant financial information.

The report lists the projects funded in connection with the implementation of the intervention framework and presents, for each project, the following information:

- a) the priority of intervention;
- b) the name of the project and the promoter;
- c) the total cost of the project;
- d) the amount committed.

The activity report lists the sectoral agreements adopted during the reference year as well as those for which the MRC made a payment. For each one, the report indicates:

- a) the priority of intervention to which the agreement responds;
- b) the name of the agreement and the project holder;
- c) the total cost of the agreement;
- d) the amount committed by the stake holders;
- e) the amount paid in the reference year.

Finally, where applicable, the report must include information relating to any delegation granted to a non-profit organization (NPO).

Monitoring and Evaluation of Project Impacts

This section describes the monitoring procedures to be applied depending on the nature of the project being supported. These mechanisms are intended to measure the use, reach, socio-economic benefits and satisfaction of users or beneficiaries.

Follow-up of structuring projects (PSPS)

A formal follow-up must be carried out **12 months and 24 months after the commissioning of the project**, by email or phone call. The following indicators must be documented:

Performance indicators

- **Rate of use** of the service, equipment or infrastructure financed.
- **Number of beneficiaries** who have benefitted from the project since its implementation.
- **User satisfaction rates** based on surveys or documented feedback.
- **Number of maintenance interventions** carried out in order to maintain the operationality of the project.

This data makes it possible to assess the continued relevance of the project, its viability and its contribution to the development of the territory.

Follow-up of entrepreneurial projects (PSE)

Un A structured support process is set up for the beneficiary companies.

Quarterly monitoring

- Phone call or email every 3 months for 24 months to review:
 - Progress of activities.
 - The obstacles encountered.
 - Any additional needs.

12 and 24 month follow-up

An in-depth evaluation is carried out according to the following criteria:

Indicators of economic development

- **Evolution** of the volume of production.
- **Turnover** since obtaining support.
- **Number of jobs created** or consolidated.

Territorial benefits

- Indirect benefits generated in the territory:
 - impacts on the local supply chain,
 - services used,
 - regional collaborations,
 - effects on other sectors.

Assessment Tool

In order to ensure the harmonization of monitoring, a common evaluation grid will be used. It shall consist of (See Annex B):

- Economic performance data.
- Qualitative indicators (innovation, diversification, partnerships).
- Analysis of territorial impacts.
- Recommendations for the follow-up or improvement.

Event Project Tracking (PSFGE)

For event-type projects (festivals, conferences, public activities), a follow-up must be carried out **within 3 months** of the event.

The follow-up must document:

- Participation and attendance observed.
- Direct and indirect economic benefits.
- The satisfaction of participants and partners.
- The prospects for the recurrence of the event.

Follow-up of study projects

Follow-up should be carried out **12 months after the end of the study** to assess its use and scope.

What to document

- **Publication of the study:** state of play, dissemination, accessibility.
- **Targeted problem:** relevance of the initial problem and adequacy with current needs.
- **Potential or actual** use of the study, including:
 - integration into strategic planning,
 - influence on other projects,
 - contributions to the development of public policies.

10. POLICY INTERPRETATION

To avoid any ambiguity in the interpretation of this policy, please contact the MRC's economic development department at the following address:
développement@mrcpontiac.qc.ca

11. UPDATING, MODIFYING AND EVOLVING THE INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK FOR THE VITALITY OF THE TERRITORY

The MRC Pontiac reserves the right to evolve, update and modify this Intervention Framework according to the constraints at the time of its implementation, the issues of the territory and the availability of funds.

In the interest of transparency, the latest version, as well as the main changes, will be available on our official website.

Annexe A – Declaration of Compliance

Municipality of _____

The Municipality hereby confirms that the developer's project, described below, has been the subject for review regarding the required municipal authorizations (permits, certificates of authorization, etc.) and that it complies with the laws and regulations for which the application is the responsibility of the Municipality.

Project description:

Project location (describe the project location by the address and lot number):

This _____ day of _____ 20____

By :

Signature of a duly authorized officer

Municipality of _____



ANNEXE B – Guidance for Follow-up Officers

This evaluation grid must be used by the agents responsible for monitoring the funded entrepreneurial projects. It aims to standardize the analysis, ensure the consistency of the information collected and facilitate the production of consolidated reports on economic and territorial benefits.

1. Timing of the follow-up

The agent must complete this grid during the formal follow-ups carried out:

- **12 months** after the implementation of the project;
- **24 months** after the implementation of the project.

Data may be collected during:

- a **telephone interview**,
- a **structured email**,
- or a face-to-face or **virtual meeting**, as needed.

2. Method of Collecting Information

The officer must:

- Verify the accuracy of the data provided by the company (documents, financial statements, proof of activities, etc.);
- Ask the key questions associated with each section of the grid;
- Specify the data sources used (verbal statements, documents provided, field observations);
- Add explanatory notes when answers require context.

3. Evaluation of the information collected

The assessment must be:

- **Objective**, based on available evidence;
- **Consistent**, applying the same criteria for all companies;
- **Comprehensive**, documenting each section of the grid, even when some data is not available.

If information cannot be obtained, the officer must mention:

- reason,
- the steps taken,
- and, if necessary, propose a corrective measure (e.g., second contact, request for documents).

4. Drafting of recommendations

The "Recommendations" section should provide a clear picture of the remaining needs or issues, for example:

- accompanying measures to be considered;
- suggestions to improve the performance or impact of the project;
- identified risks (financial, operational, market);
- needs additional or close monitoring.

Recommendations should be formulated in a manner that:

- **precise**,
- **useful**,
- **and action-oriented**.



5. Archiving and transmission

Once the grid is completed:

- It must be included in the electronic project file ;
- Highlights should be communicated to the program manager;
- In the event of significant difficulties observed, the officer must promptly notify the responsible authorities.

Follow-up Evaluation Grid - Entrepreneurial Projects (PSE)

Section	Assessed Considerations	Key Questions/Indicators	Data to be collected
1. Economic performance data	Financial and operational performance	- Has the production volume increased or been stabilized since the support? - How has turnover evolved? - Has the project created or maintained jobs? - Has the company improved its efficiency or capabilities? -	- Production volume (before/after) - Turnover (12 and 24 months) - Number of jobs created/retained - Investments made
2. Qualitative indicators	Innovation, diversification, partnerships	- Has the project introduced a new product, service or process? - Has it allowed a diversification of activities? - Has it generated new partnerships or strategic collaborations? - Does the project increase the resilience or competitiveness of the company? -	- New technologies / processes - New products or markets - Partners involved - Observed qualitative benefits
3. Analysis of territorial impacts	Direct and indirect benefits on the territory	- Does the project contribute to strengthening the local economy? - Has it generated knock-on effects (local purchases, services, subcontracting)? - Has it made it possible to strengthen a strategic sector of the territory? -	- Local economic benefits - Local companies or organizations involved - Sector or ecosystem dynamics
4. Recommendations for follow-up or improvement	Actions to support the progress of the project	- Does the company have additional needs (mentoring, financing, training)? - What actions could improve the scope or performance of the project? - Are there any risks or issues to watch out for? -	- Recommended actions - Proposed follow-ups - Identified risks