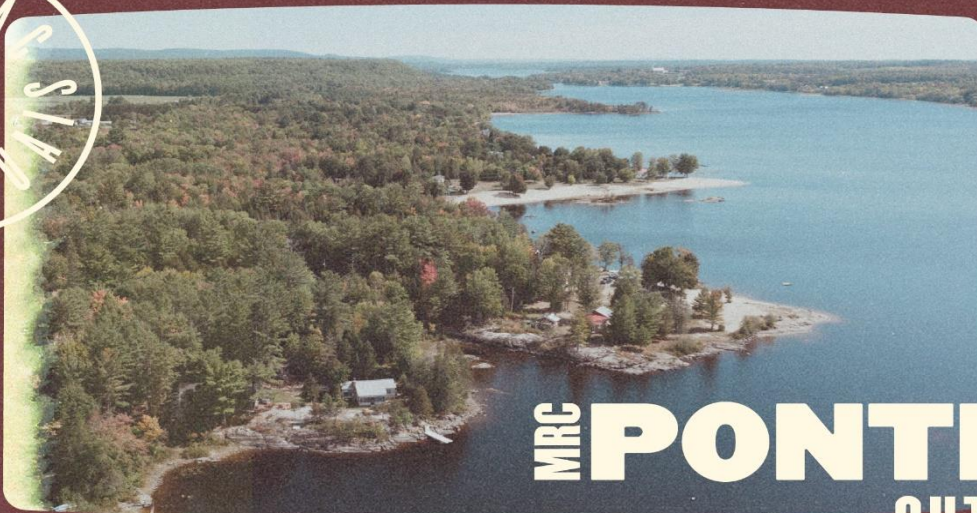


Region and Rurality funds

Component – 2: Support for local and regional development projects of the MRC

SUPPORT POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
TO IMPROVE LIVING ENVIRONMENTS

2024



MRC PONTIAC
OUTAOUAIS

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1. POLICY FOUNDATION

1.1 Context

In March of 2020, the Regional Municipality of Pontiac County (MRC Pontiac) signed an agreement relating to the Region and Rurality Funds: Component 2 - Support for local and regional development projects of the MRC with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAMH). Through this agreement, the MAMH recognizes the competence of the MRC Pontiac in local and regional development. They call upon the MRC to establish its annual priorities for intervention and to file a support policy for development projects to improve living environments. The present document constitutes this policy for the year 2023.

1.2 Field of application

The MRC Pontiac shall allocate the portion of the fund delegated to it by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, to any local and regional development measures taken by the MRC Pontiac under the agreement.

These measures may include the following:

- The realization of its mandates with regard to the planning and development of its territory;
- Supporting local municipalities in professional expertise or in establishing shared services (social, cultural, tourism, environmental, technological or other fields);
- The promotion of entrepreneurship, support for entrepreneurship and business;
- Mobilization of communities and support for the implementation of development projects to improve living environments, particularly in the social, cultural, tourism, economic and environmental fields;
- The establishment, funding and implementation of sectoral local and regional development agreements with government departments or agencies and, where applicable, other partners;
- Support for rural development within the municipal and unorganized territory of the MRC Pontiac.

1.3 Objectives

The principal objective of the *Support policy for development projects to improve living environments* is to promote the implementation of initiatives leading to the revitalization of living environments in the MRC Pontiac and/or to create and maintain jobs on the territory of the MRC Pontiac. These two major elements must improve the quality of life of the citizens of the MRC Pontiac and are based on the following principles:

- **Promote the sharing of equipment or services** and the establishment of multi-service centres within municipalities or non-profit organizations;
- **Support the multifunctional development of the territory** by establishing links with other players, other communities and other sectors of activity;
- **Stimulate the beautification of communities** by making living environments more attractive and welcoming to new residents;
- **Attract and retain young people** by encouraging employability initiatives for youth and the next generation of farmers, by encouraging initiatives that are aimed towards them;

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- **Support a community transportation service** by ensuring that it meets the multiple needs of the community (medical transportation, public transportation, transportation of food aid for isolated or impoverished populations);
- **Encourage efforts to attract families** by promoting the implementation of incentives and initiatives that improve access to quality housing;
- **Establish new technologies** in order to increase the competitiveness of businesses and public services and facilitate the establishment of self-employed workers;
- **Create environments conducive to healthy lifestyles** by developing measures that allow for better eating habits and a physically active lifestyle.

1.4 Targeted territory

This policy applies to the entire territory of the MRC Pontiac.

1.5 Admissible beneficiaries

Recipients eligible for a grant under this policy are:

- Municipalities;
- Band Councils of Aboriginal communities¹;
- Co-operatives (except financial co-operatives);
- Non-profit organizations;
- Associations.

Each of the eligible beneficiaries must be legally constituted. Its head office must be located on the territory of the MRC Pontiac. The beneficiary must also be registered in the Registre des entreprises du Québec (REQ) and its status must be up to date.

1.6 Priority fields of intervention

The mayors of the eighteen municipalities of the MRC Pontiac have established and forwarded to the Minister their priorities for action. These are posted on the MRC Pontiac website and are grouped under the following seven priority areas of intervention:

- Tourism
- Culture and heritage
- Economic growth
- Agriculture
- Socio-community
- Environnement
- Forestry

¹ The Band Council is a private, fully autonomous organization that must comply with certain regulations and provisions of the Indian Act. It has powers in the areas of education, social services, health, etc. Source: Québec Portal, Government Activity Thesaurus

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1.7 Admissible projects and expenses

The projects selected under this policy are projects for the creation and/or diversification of activities. The objective is, above all, the creation of new wealth. Eligible expenses are intended for projects that serve populations residing in the MRC Pontiac, that comply with the laws and regulations applicable to them.

Eligible expenses retained under the policy are as follows:

- Capital assets/capital expenditures (land, buildings, equipment, machinery, automotive equipment);
- Acquisition of technology, software or software packages and patents;
- Professional fees/honoraria or promotion costs strictly related to the project;
- Salaries strictly related to a development project (project coordination costs), in proportion to the time spent if the proponent or its employees take on other tasks;
- Costs deemed necessary for the project (the proponent must specify the nature of the costs);
- Non-refundable sales taxes, as per the following:

Type of public service body	Rebate rate	
	GST	QST
Municipalities	100 %	50 %
Charity, public institution and qualifying non-profit organization (only for activities other than those related to a specified public service body)	50 %	50 %

Expenses must be made within the MRC Pontiac, failing that, in the province of Québec, unless the material or professional resource (services) is not available in the MRC or the province.

Any expense made outside the MRC Pontiac must be approved in writing by a Development Agent of the MRC Pontiac.

1.8 Inadmissible projects and expenses

Projects not selected under this policy are current projects carried out by the proponent, consolidation projects and projects that do not generate economic spinoffs in the territory.

The following expenses are not eligible under this policy:

- Debt financing, loan repayment or working capital replenishment;
- A project already completed;
- Working capital;
- Operating expenses such as rent, salaries and current payroll taxes of the organization, telecommunications and website costs;
- Room rentals, office supplies;
- Insurance;
- Bank charges and interest;
- Maintenance of premises;
- Amortization of real estate assets;
- Hospitality and entertainment expenses;
- Training expenses;
- Membership fees;
- Feasibility studies ;
- Expenses related to a festival or one-time event;
- Any expenses incurred prior to the date of approval by the review committee;

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

In addition, 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 under this policy.

2. INVESTMENT CRITERIA

Prioritised projects must contribute to local and regional development.

2.1. Nature of the project

Projects must fall within the priority areas of intervention defined in Article 1.6 and touch on at least one (1) of the intervention priorities posted on the MRC Pontiac website.

2.2. Innovation

Innovative projects that create new wealth will be prioritised. The nature of the project as well as the innovation process surrounding the project will be analyzed. In some cases, the creation of new services may be considered innovative.

2.3. Job creation and economic impacts

The primary investment criterion is job creation. At the very least, projects must contribute to job maintenance. If they do not create jobs, projects must generate significant economic spinoffs, particularly through contracts with businesses in the MRC Pontiac.

2.4. Revitalization and local needs

Projects must contribute to the revitalization of living environments by responding to clearly identified needs expressed at different levels by the communities or by referring to existing policies (cultural policies, Agricultural Zone Development Plan, family policies, local action plan, etc.).

2.5. Applicant experience and investment capacity

The applicant will have to demonstrate their knowledge and skills to carry out a development project, as well as their commitment to invest financially in the project.

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

3.1 Analysis process

The Council of Elected Officials of the MRC Pontiac is the guarantor of the orientations of this policy. In this sense, driving projects in development are predefined and prioritised by the Pontiac Regional Council of Elected Officials according to the priority areas of intervention (art. 1.6).

The Council of Mayors of the MRC Pontiac will decide to hold a call for projects based on the credits available in the fund.

The process for a call for projects is as follows:

1. Launch of the call for projects
2. Launching of the program criteria and application form on the MRC Pontiac website
3. Mandatory appointment with a development agent of the MRC Pontiac to submit a request
4. Receipt of requests and verification of requests by the development team
5. Analysis, scoring of projects based on the analysis grid and recommendations by the analysis committee of the MRC Pontiac. Said committee is composed of 2 elected officials, 1 citizen, 1 NPO representative and 1 representative from the Outaouais regional development community
6. final adoption of the prioritised projects by the Pontiac Regional Council of Elected Officials.
7. Follow-up of the chosen projects by the development team
8. Project accountability by the promoters
9. Program accountability by the development team

3.2 Project financing

The policy of support for development projects to improve living environments is an integral part of the FRR. In this sense, the non-repayable contribution from this fund is considered governmental in nature and not as part of the proponent's capital outlay.

3.2.1 Maximum aide

The aid granted is a maximum of 80 % of the total cost of the project. The promoter must contribute a minimum of 20% of the total cost of the project. This capital outlay is calculated as follows:

A minimum of 20 % of the total admissible project costs in monetary contribution

Or

A minimum of 10 % of the total admissible project cost in monetary contribution **AND a maximum** of 10 % of the total admissible project costs in service of volunteer contribution (calculated at the

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current minimum wage rate for labour. This rate plus \$5.00/hour for project coordination and supervision). *Non-profit organizations with no paid staff can benefit from this option. An additional form must be attached to the final report (see Appendix C), to declare the number of in-kind services rendered. This form will be supplied by the MRC and must be signed by the person responsible for the file and by the person whose in-kind hours are being counted.

3.2.2 Accumulation of government assistance

The maximum accumulation of government assistance (municipal, provincial, or federal) includes the total financial assistance granted. If another government program is used to contribute to the financing of the project, the accumulation rule must be respected.

3.2.2 non-completion

If the project is not carried out, the promoter must reimburse 100% of the sums received for the project.

Expenditures must be made in accordance with the terms and conditions described in the agreement contract to be signed between the promoter and the MRC Pontiac. The promoter's financial capacity to carry out its project will be a determining factor in the awarding of a grant. A letter from the bank may be required to this effect.

3.3 Disbursement of funds

Funding for the project will be in three instalments distributed as follows:

- First Instalment: 35% of the total grant as a cash advance upon signing the agreement;
- Second instalment: 30% of the total grant upon presentation of invoices and proof of payment;
- Third instalment: 35% of the total grant when the project is completed in accordance with the terms set out in the financial assistance agreement.

3.4 Reporting

The promoter must submit an activity report and final balance sheet (including invoices and proof of payment) with all the qualitative and quantitative details related to the project. The promoter must keep original supporting documents and records relating to the amounts granted under the agreement for a period of seven years following the end of the project. The MRC Pontiac is subject to the same constraints.

3.5 Availability of credits

Any financial commitment is valid only if there is a sufficient balance of available credits in the fund to charge the expense and according to the amounts made available to the MRC by the Minister under the Regions and Ruralty Fund: **Component 2 - Support for local and regional development projects of the MRC.**

3.6 Distribution of credits

The funds available will be divided into two separate and distinct streams:
Stream 1 - municipalities; Stream 2 - NPOs, associations, co-operatives, band councils for Aboriginal communities (distribution according to the table below).

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The distribution of funds is intended to ensure equitable access to funds for all eligible applicants. The analysis committee may decide to redistribute the funds based on the number of eligible projects submitted under each component.

Amount available	100 %
Stream 1 Municipalities	50 %
Projects less than \$5,000	10 %
Projects greater than \$5,000	90 %
Stream 2 NPOs, Coops, band councils for Aboriginal communities	50 %
Projects less than \$5,000	10 %
Projects greater than \$5,000	90 %

3.7 Visibility

The promoter who receives financial assistance is obliged 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 financial agreement to be signed and reviewed with a representative of the economic development department at the time of signature.

4. CALL FOR PROJECTS

4.1 Identification of the promoting organization

Provide all useful information on the promoting organization, specifying the name of the promoter, the complete address, the telephone number, the email address, the website (if existing), the Québec enterprise number (NEQ), the location of the project and its legal status.

4.2 Identification of the applicant

Enter the applicant's name and contact information. This person, identified by the municipality or organization, will be the person who is authorized to sign the agreement with the MRC.

4.3 Description of the project

Enter the title of the project, specify the general and specific objectives, the needs and/or challenges of the environment to which it should respond. The description of the project should be accompanied, if possible, by any document allowing a better understanding of the project, for example a business plan, study, planning document of the organization, etc.

4.4 Intervention priorities

Identify which intervention priority your project corresponds to. If your project corresponds to more than one priority, you can check more than one box.

4.5 Job creation and maintenance

Improving the living conditions of the population as well as creating and maintaining jobs are important components of development. Identify the jobs maintained or created because of the completion of your project. Be sure to specify the number of jobs created or maintained by the structuring project to improve living environments, specifying whether they are seasonal, permanent, full-time, or part-time.

4.6 Improvement of living environments

Demonstrate how your project improves the living environments on the territory of the MRC Pontiac. Economic, social and environmental aspect:

- Does it increase the number of quality jobs as well as job accessibility?
- Does the project ensure or increase the availability of services?
- Does the project improve hospitality conditions for existing populations or new arrivals?
- Does the project recover residual materials?

4.7 Project innovation/creativity

Describe how your project stands out and brings a structuring or innovative outcome to the environment.

4.8 Economic benefits

Detail the significant economic benefits in the region, and how the businesses of the MRC Pontiac may be implicated.

4.9 Financial partner/collaborator

The promoter demonstrates that he establishes links with financial partners and/or collaborators that can lead to the realization of the project.

4.10 Project timeline

Describe the different stages of the project, including the actions to be taken and its timelines for completion, as well as the anticipated date of completion for the project.

4.11 Budget

Describe the costs required to carry out the project. Costs must come from realistic and accurate estimates (**2 estimations are required**). The total projected costs must equal the total funding sources. Funding confirmations (such as a funding confirmation letter) must accompany the application.

5. SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

5.1 Application Procedures

Requests **MUST** be received no later than **12:00 (noon) on the date announced during the launch of the call for projects.**

Since the application form is designed to be submitted electronically, the MRC Pontiac does not expect to receive paper submissions.

If necessary, a paper copy may be submitted if **received two (2) days before the announced closing date.**

These submissions can be sent by:

In person at the MRC Pontiac:

Economic Development Department
MRC Pontiac
602 Route 301 – Box 580
Campbell's Bay, Québec J0X 1K0

Or By email:

developpement@mrcpontiac.qc.ca

Questions and support

For more information regarding this fund, to make an appointment with a development commissioner (mandatory) or to request support, please contact Annick Lance, Assistant to the Economic Development Department by phone at 819-648- 5689, extension 122 or email to a.lance@mrcpontiac.qc.ca

ANNEXE A - Documents to be included with the application

The following documents **MUST be submitted** otherwise the application will not be analyzed:

- Duly completed application.
- Initial Budget (See section 4.d) of the application form).
- Letter for all volunteer contributions.
- Declaration and signature (section 7 of the application form).
- GST/QST tax forms, if applicable.
[Information Return for Tax-Exempt Entities \(form TP-997.1-V\)](#) when applicable.
- Resolution from the Board of Directors authorizing a member of the organization to sign this application, as well as all relevant documents pertaining to this application (agreement, final report).
- Resolution from the Board of Directors confirming a minimum commitment of 20% (where at least 10% being monetary in nature) of the project's total cost.
- Letters of patent or any official constitutional documents pertaining to the lead organization. (Not applicable for municipalities)
- Letters of intention from all project partners confirming their contribution and indicating the amount and nature of their commitment **including in-kind**.
- Letter of support or collaboration from municipalities or other local organizations with interests.
- Minimum two (2) quotes or estimates, if applicable.
- Financial statements from the last two (2) years of operation. (Not applicable for municipalities)
- Updated list of the Board of Directors. (Not applicable for municipalities)
- Declaration of conformity duly completed by the municipality for all construction, renovation or expansion projects, or if the economic development department deems it necessary (Annexe B)

ANNEXE B – Declaration of conformity

Municipality of _____

The Municipality hereby confirms that the developer's project described below has received all the required municipal authorizations (permits, certificates of authorization, etc.) and that it complies with the laws and regulations whose application is the responsibility of the Municipality.

Project Description :

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

This date _____ 202__

By:

Signature of duly authorized official

Municipality of _____

ANNEXE C - In-kind labour declaration (for NPO)

Complete this form for all declared in-kind contributions. Eligible in-kind contributions are investments in the project in the form of unpaid work (volunteer work). Paid employees are not eligible as in-kind time. The maximum in-kind contribution for labour is 10% of the total project cost. The completed in-kind claim form must be submitted to the MRC Pontiac with the final project report to substantiate all in-kind contributions.

Name and number of in-kind hours declared by the worker:

Last name, First Name :	Total number of hours:
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Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Tasks	Number of declared hours	Rate (\$15.75/hr) (20.75/hr for coordinator)	Total (\$)
Total in-kind labour				

I declare that the above hours and tasks are correct.

Signature of employee Date

Signature of the person in charge of the project Date