



Warden's Report

2014 - 2015

October 27, 2015

To the Citizens of Pontiac County:

As County Warden, and on behalf of the members of the MRC Pontiac Council of Elected Representatives (CER), it is my pleasure to inform you on the state of finances of the Regional County Municipality of Pontiac (MRC Pontiac), as required by the law governing local municipalities, but also for reasons of equity and transparency.

This year has been one of transition for many local government organisations, and the MRC was not spared. Significant cuts in programs and the reallocation of development funds at the Government of Quebec has led to the closure of the Local Development Centre (CLD Pontiac) and a reorganisation of services formerly delivered by the Economic Development Corporation (CDE) of Pontiac.

Inevitably, these changes disrupted local and entrepreneurial development for a time. In response, our CER, employees, partners, and other local stakeholders combined our efforts to develop management strategies and set objectives to meet the needs of our 18 communities for years to come. I am proud of this great collaboration that allowed us, among other things, to establish a multi-sectoral management approach and enter into a strategic agreement with the SADC Pontiac, which will ensure more efficient service delivery to local businesses.

There are still several challenges ahead of us, but with sure leadership and the spirit of cooperation that is increasingly present on our territory, we are confident that we will continue to create the conditions necessary for prosperous development to the benefit of all Pontiac residents.

Finally, I must emphasize the importance of our provincial and federal representatives' support. I take this opportunity to thank our outgoing MP, Mr. Mathieu Ravnat, for his dedication and involvement in the betterment of our communities. I also congratulate and welcome his successor, Mr. Will Amos. Now, more than ever, I hope that our representatives will be there to support us in our endeavours, to listen and take action to promote growth in our Regional County Municipality. We are relying on their support in all of our initiatives.

Financial Report

According to the analysis prepared by our auditor firm, Janique Éthier, C.P.A. Inc., our 2014 financial statements show an accumulated surplus of \$ 851,563, of which \$ 84,989 will be appropriated to the 2015 budget. Revenues for the year are \$ 5,671,600 and expenditures are \$ 5,419,248, creating a \$ 253,419 surplus over the 2014 budget.

The remuneration of elected officials, before deduction and including benefits, is \$ 33,953 for the warden, of which \$ 3,000 is redistributed in charitable donations in the community, culture, and education sectors, \$ 19,807 for the pro-warden, and, in total, \$ 25,467 for committee chairs and \$ 75,093 for Council members.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2014-2015

	REVENUES	Budget 2015	Financial Statement 2014
1	Municipal Shares	\$ 2,731,561	\$ 2,678,000
2	Municipal Services	137,343	135,299
3	SAAQ Office	64,000	68,037
4	Lease Management on Crown Land	186,998	310,438
5	Other Revenues	62,512	88,595
6	Diversification of Revenue	152,110	152,110
7	MRC Operations	126,900	126,900
8	Long-term Financing	132,147	130,379
9	Public Safety	5,459	3,171
10	Environment Management	48,336	16,112
11	Renovation Programs	5,555	50,497
12	Development Grants	1,052,675	1,479,975
13	TransporAction	286,000	318,205
14	PPJ Maintenance and Management	0	77,083
15	Sports and Leisure	25,650	36,799
16	Total Revenue	\$ 5,017,246	\$ 5,671,600
17	Allocation of Accumulated Surplus	84 989	0
18	Total Revenue	\$ 5,102,235	\$ 5,671,600

EXPENSES		Budget 2015	Financial Statement 2014
1	Legislative	\$ 221,659	\$ 218,267
2	Financial and Administrative Management	842,467	888,020
3	Other	11,500	11,376
4	SAAQ Office	142,264	114,664
5	Public Safety		
6	<i>Fire and Public Safety</i>	143,847	148,503
7	<i>Animal Control</i>	86,680	76,614
8	Evaluation	782,100	726,328
9	Sports and Leisure	95,297	92,376
10	Environmental Health	91,096	80,415
11	Land Planning	89,531	80,001
12	Geomatics	97,298	96,423
13	Forestry	75,000	81,846
14	Lease Management for Crown Land	181,998	184,686
15	Strategic Development	40,000	21,840
16	Trails Network	149,748	229,920
17	Culture and Heritage	191,246	162,000
18	Rural Pact	605,480	633,017
19	Transportation	311,000	318,205
20	Special Projects	123,427	28,703
21	Partnerships and Development	470,498	974,520
22	General Expenditure	61,052	44,756
23	Renovation Program	5,000	45,756
24	Other	7,700	7,680
25	Short and Long-term Funding	137,347	129,857
26	Capital Costs	139,000	23,475
27	Total Expenditure	\$ 5,102,235	\$ 5,419,248
28	Surplus (déficit)	0 \$	\$ 253 419

Share Distribution 2015

Budget Item	Cost	Share
Legislative and Administration	\$ 1,217,890	\$ 904,210
Evaluation	782,100	777,600
Public Safety	143,847	138,388
Animal Control	86,680	86,680
Environment	91,096	42,136
Sports and Leisure	95,297	69,022
Land Use Planning and Development	2,685,325	713,525
Total	\$ 5,102,235	\$ 2,731,561

List of Contracts

Following is the list of contracts involving expenditures of more than \$ 25,000, and contracts of more than \$ 2,000 entered into with a unique supplier when the sum of the expenditure during the financial period is more than \$ 25,000. The complete list of contracts is available at the General Manager's office and will soon be posted on our website at www.mrcpontiac.qc.ca.

Group Insurance - Standard Life	Insurance Contract	2015
Forestry Development Consultant - Pierre Vézina	Professional Services	2015
Computing Services - Studio Vesprés	Service Contract	2015
Support Software for Cadastral Renewal - AZIMUT	Service Contract	2015
Contract- Waste Management- Tom Orr Carthage	Service Contract	2015
Property Assessment Services - Servitect	Professional Services	2015
MRC Pontiac Building Expansion Contract - Mercier Pfalzgraf Architectes Inc.	Service Contract	2015
Profession services for the development of a local roads infrastructure response plan - CIMA +	Professional Services	2015

Activity Report

A major restructuring of public services at the provincial level has shaken regional management and development approaches throughout the province. For example, the abolition of the Outaouais Regional Conference of Elected Officials (CREO) had an impact on the Regional Table of Integrated Resource and Territory Management (GIR), which was administered by a CREO subcommittee. With the Ministry of Forestry, Wildlife and Parks' support, Outaouais MRCs and the city of Gatineau have designated the MRC Pontiac to administer the Table's annual budget of \$ 672,584 along with the development, coordination, and implementation of specific projects arising from the GIR Table.

The many changes at the Government of Quebec and budget cuts also had an impact on our organisational structure and gave us much on which to reflect in terms of our service delivery (see Human Resources).

2015 also marked the beginning of the MRC building expansion. This \$ 1.5 million construction project will allow us to meet building code standards and our obligation to provide a safe and healthy work environment for our employees, without increasing municipal shares.

Following are the year's highlights:

GOVERNANCE

We have made major changes to the legislative sessions of the MRC Pontiac Council of Elected Representatives (CER) by consolidating working committees under one plenary session. This new approach allows the 18 mayors of the county to immerse themselves more deeply into all regional issues, not only the files managed by the committee on which they served, in order to properly coordinate local and regional activities for which they are responsible.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The mission of Regional County Municipality (MRC) employees is to implement the decisions taken by the CER. To that end, our team of professionals works on creating and implementing development strategies and approaches, programs, and tools with the ultimate goals of economic growth, social and cultural development, and the management and protection of our territory.

New Multisector Team

The CDE and CLD closures led to the creation of a new development department at the MRC. The reconstructed multisector team is made up of five commissioners and a sports, leisure and cultural activities coordinator. This reorganization and our partnership with the SADC Pontiac have allowed us to reduce our workforce to reflect the Government of Quebec's budget cuts.

It should be noted that, despite the ambiguity of mandates, programs and budgets, and the sometimes chaotic working conditions during construction, our employees have never wavered

from their commitment to the CER and the communities we represent. I thank them for their tenacity and flexibility during this transition.

Communications

In July 2015, we added a communications advisor to our team to ensure the rapid and timely dissemination of information to citizens and partners, enhance our effectiveness, and improve the reputation of our MRC inside and outside the territory. Her responsibilities include advising managers, employees, and municipalities in their communications projects, maintaining media relations, and developing means of communication based on new technologies.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the valuable contribution of our local media in keeping our citizens well informed, and thank them for their cooperation during this period of transition.

REGIONAL AND FOREST DEVELOPMENT

For the 2014-2015 season of the Regional and Forest Development Program, the forest management project on intramunicipal public lands generated \$ 734,464 for our region's forestry suppliers and contractors.

For the bridges and culverts program on the Pontiac's multi-purpose forest roads, the MRC has earmarked \$ 105,470 to sponsor, or partner in, 11 watercourse crossings reconstruction projects, for \$ 591,650 worth of projects.

For the regular maintenance program on the Pontiac's multi-purpose forest roads, the MRC has invested \$ 150,000 for road maintenance on the strategic network of access roads to the territory identified by the MRC.

We have also agreed to invest up to \$ 25,000 for the construction of a boat launch ramp at Lake Dumont to provide user access to the water.

FIRE SAFETY

We signed a memorandum of agreement with five municipalities in the MRC Vallée-de-la-Gatineau to supply fire inspection services in high-risk and very high-risk buildings. This agreement, which includes an investment in training, will be very profitable for our municipalities as the MRC's Public Safety Department can now perform multiple mandatory inspections of equipment in our territory's various fire departments, a service that we previously had to contract out.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL-COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In a new agreement with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Land Occupancy (MAMOT), the MRC has received \$ 913,069 to invest in territory development. These investments will be in projects, salaries, and investments in private companies and our communities.

In business development...

We have entered into two service agreements related to development of entrepreneurship, the first with the SADC Pontiac for the treatment of financial assistance requests for business start-up and expansion, and a second with Emploi Québec (EQ) to assist new entrepreneurs in EQ's self-employment support program.

In agricultural development...

Several projects from PDZA the action plan were carried out, including technical and financial support to the Pontiac Hops Cooperative, which led to the acquisition of a hops pelletizer. More than \$ 100,000 was invested in this project.

We also joined the inter-MRC land bank, which allows us to showcase our agricultural land and encourage the next generation of farmers. This project will provide assistance to potential producers and pair them with farmers or landowners.

In cultural development...

Our classified public monuments proudly reflect our history and our identity. That is why we have invested \$ 30,000 in renovating the Bryson House roof. This building is a gem of our Pontiac heritage, and important to tourism development.

In the same vein, the MRC has produced a heritage guide to help our 18 municipalities in the identification and preservation of our heritage buildings. In addition to a municipal inventory of identity buildings, the guide includes small, inexpensive actions that municipalities can take to set an example and help property owners.

We also recovered the Stone School in Portage-du-Fort from the CLD assets in order to guarantee its vocation as the Centre for visual arts in the Pontiac. This building has been used for the creation, promotion, and dissemination of the arts since 2008.

In tourism development...

Whether in development or maintenance of tourism infrastructure, coaching and support to the industry, or to finance projects in private companies, the MRC has invested over \$ 400,000 in the tourism sector during the last year.

We launched the first virtual circuit available on cell phones in the region "*A train history in Pontiac,*" which allows visitors and residents to discover Pontiac's different elements of the history of the construction of the train. We also acquired River Road in the Municipality of Litchfield for the sum of \$ 1. This road, which has been closed to traffic since 2006, will connect the villages of Bryson and l'Île-du-Grand-Calumet to the PPJ Cyclopark.

MAJOR PROJECTS

Our partnership in the Picanoc.net network allowed us to obtain a grant of over \$ 480,536 for a project totalling \$ 1,072,960 on Picanoc Network territory to improve internet access for citizens of Pontiac and Vallée-de-la-Gatineau, and for our business communities.

Underway, is another major project, that of the Biomass Conversion Centre (BCC), an innovative project that will have a strong positive impact on our economic development and the recovery of our forest industry. The centre's primary objective is to optimize our forest resource by converting low-quality wood to high-value products for high growth markets, such as bio refinery for the production of commercial sugars.

I feel, among our partners and stakeholders, an open mindedness towards our vision and for the pursuit of growth-generating projects. We are united in our belief that the status quo can no longer exist. Our definition of the word community is constantly changing, and our responsibilities in the current local and regional economic context, are increasingly important.

Our challenge is to be recognized to our just value for:

- Our varied and innovative specialty products;
- Our forestry potential, a sector that is, and always will be, a pillar of our economy;
- Our tourism destination and exceptional attractions;
- Our diversified and competitive service industry;
- Our living environment and the vitality of our communities.

Behind our collective effort, which allows us to make the most of our opportunities and excel in our projects, is the solid cooperation of the members of your Council of Elected Representatives, our employees, various organizations, and the many volunteers who have contributed to the achievement of exemplary projects in 2014 / 2015. A big thank you to all!

Our guidelines for 2016

Over the next year, we will work on our communication strategies and multiply our collective efforts through partnerships in order to be more effective in the development of specific files, such as:

- The Félix Gabriel Marchand Bridge (Red Bridge) – We will continue to work towards fixing and re-opening the bridge to traffic. Our citizens have loudly expressed their wish to save the bridge, and we, elected officials, are united in our determination to protect this important and useful part of our heritage.
- Frequent power outages on our territory – We will continue to cooperate in monitoring failures. There have been some improvements, but we must remain vigilant.
- Parks Development – We will intensify our efforts and partnerships in such projects as: Parc du Sault-des-Chats, Îles Lafontaine, and the Dumoine River.
- Cellular Phone Service – We will intervene to bring the latest cell phone technology to our territory;
- Health and Education – We will closely monitor our health and education systems;
- Emergency Services – We will maintain our evaluation and integration activities in order to provide emergency services focused on the needs of the population.
- Forest Industry – We will intensify our involvement in the forest industry and solve the problem created by our underutilized pulp wood resource.
- Waste Disposal – We will find a waste disposal solution tailored to our local situation. Transportation of waste over long distances is an outdated concept.

- Penitentiary – We will step up our efforts in the implementation of a prison on our territory.

In conclusion, I call on you, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Pontiac, to encourage positive discussions, open constructive dialogue, and participate with your elected officials in creating the future of our expectations.

I especially want to thank each and every one of you for your understanding, your cooperation, your support, and for the trust you place in us.

On behalf of the employees of the MRC Pontiac, the Pontiac Council of Elected Representatives, and on my own behalf, I offer you and yours our best wishes for health, happiness and prosperity.

Raymond Durocher