



# 2015 SENIORS MUNICIPAL POLICY MUNICIPALITY OF PONTIAC

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## 1. A word from the Mayor



It gives me great pleasure to present our new policy *Municipalité amie des aînés (MADA)* “Age-friendly Municipality” as well as the action plan that has been produced as a result of it. It emanates from lengthy reflection allowing citizens and organizations in the region to express themselves on the key challenges that the senior citizens of our community are facing.

Following public consultations, as part of this approach, it is clear that we need to do more in order to adapt our practices to the reality of an ageing population... that is still active.

If the participation of the public, the elected representatives and the municipal administration is any indication, we believe that we are ready to rise to the challenges ahead.

I wish to thank the members of the MADA committee and the *Table autonome des aînés des Collines* who have invested a lot of time and energy in this project. The work accomplished is very impressive. I want to reassure you that the municipal council will do everything possible to implement this policy’s action plan. As of the next budget, we should be able to allocate the necessary funds to launch some of the proposed projects.

Much work lies ahead but I am certain that together, we will succeed.

Roger Larose

Mayor of the Municipality of Pontiac

## 2. Word from the municipal elected representative responsible for seniors issues



In January of 2014, the Municipality of Pontiac joined the other municipalities in the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais in the approach aiming to obtain the accreditation: *Municipalité amie des aînés (MADA)*. The objective was to encourage and promote an active participation of senior citizens within our community. To make the vision of a welcoming society for all ages a reality, by developing a municipal policy and action plan in favour of the senior citizens of Pontiac.

To make this a reality, the project aimed, among other things, to slow ageism, to adapt policies, services and structures in a global and integrated fashion. To help people carry on living dignified lives on a daily basis and grow old in their homes, on the basis of the dynamic cooperation and mobilization of the entire community.

Seniors citizens are the witnesses and guardians of our social heritage and our history. They are individuals having lived various experiences who wish to share them with other generations.

They deserve help, respect, support and recognition from their community, simply for what they have bequeathed to us.

A wise man once said: "Someone is sitting in the shade today, because someone else planted a tree long ago." (W. Buffet 2007)

With the help of this reference guide, let's work today on building a better living environment for our seniors of today and tomorrow. So that they may live active, happy and healthy lives for as long as possible in their own homes, close to their families.

Many thanks to all, near and far, as well as to our municipal employees and the personnel of the *Table autonome des aînés des Collines*, who have participated in making this a reality.

On behalf of the council members who have initiated this project and the members of the local committee who have seen this project through to completion, it is with great pleasure that I present the Pontiac Seniors Municipal Policy and Action plan.

Happy reading,

R. Denis Dubé

« A senior of tomorrow who is taking advantage of the shade today, and who wishes to plant trees for others. »  
Municipal Councillor of electoral district #2 (Quyon sector)

### 3. Committee members and the Municipal Council



#### Committee members :

Bruno Alary, Pontiac citizen  
Pierrette Alary, Pontiac citizen  
Émile Côté, Pontiac citizen  
Marie-Pierre Drolet, director of the Table autonome des aînés des Collines  
R. Denis Dubé, municipal councillor responsible for seniors issues  
Guy Faubert, Pontiac citizen  
Carl Hager, Pontiac citizen  
Benedikt Kuhn, Acting Director General of the Municipality of Pontiac  
Diane Lacasse, Pontiac citizen

Marc Laframboise, Pontiac citizen  
Michel Laporte, community organizer at the CSSS Pontiac  
Denise Lavigne, Pontiac citizen  
Agnès Perrier, Pontiac citizen  
Marie-Danielle Pied, Pontiac citizen  
Pierre Sauvageau, Pontiac citizen  
Thomas Soulière, Pontiac 2020  
Robert Wagner, Pontiac citizen  
Josée Poirier Defoy, Gatineau Collective Kitchens association  
James Eggleton, Pontiac citizen

Volunteers also in this photo : Georgette Ross and Kathy Dartois.

#### Municipal Council:

Roger Larose, Mayor  
Nancy Draper Maxsom, Councillor, ward 1  
R. Denis Dubé, Councillor, ward 2  
Tom Howard, Councillor, ward 3  
Inès Pontiroli, Councillor, ward 4  
Brian Middlemiss, Councillor, ward 5  
Dr Jean Amyotte, Councillor, ward 6

## 4. Context

### *The municipality*

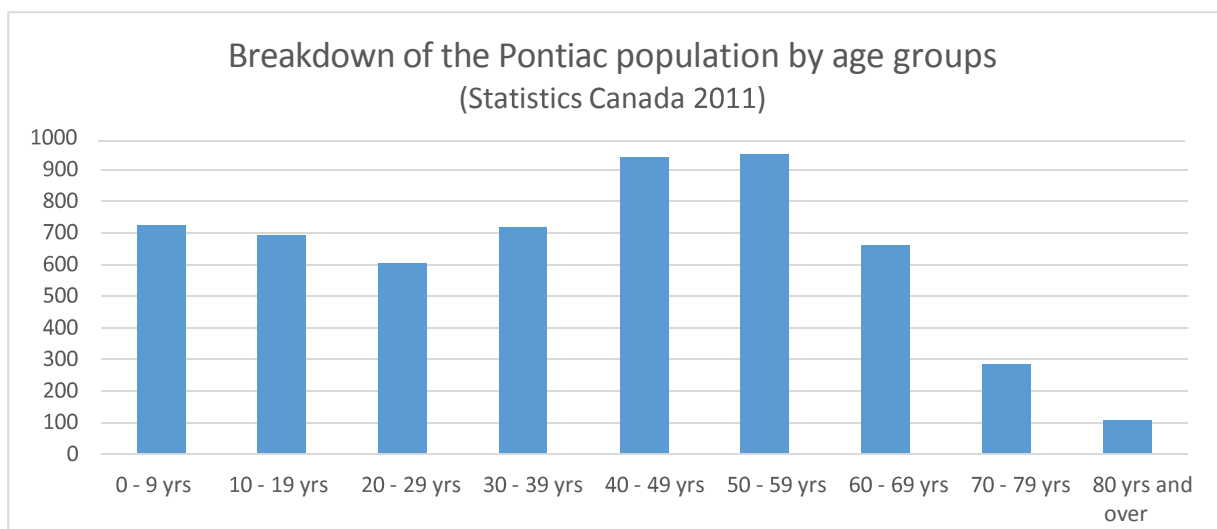
Pontiac is a rural municipality, covering a land area of 448 sq. kilometres, situated in the MRC des Collines-de-l'Outaouais, which borders the Ottawa River to the South and the Gatineau Park to the North. This is a bilingual area, where nearly 53% of the population is French-speaking, and 46% is English-speaking. Our municipality is a vast region, from the East to the West, consisting of a merger in 1975 of the former communities of South Onslow, North Onslow, Quyon and Earledey.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2011 the total population of the Municipality of Pontiac was at 5,681 inhabitants, and according to the Quebec bureau of statistics, on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2015, this number was at 5,946.

### *The MADA approach*

The MADA approach was initiated by the *Department of Families and Seniors*, and aims the adaptation of municipal services to better meet the realities of our seniors. The Municipality of Pontiac, with the help of the *Table autonome de aînés des Collines*, began the process in 2014 by creating a steering committee. This committee worked towards developing a municipal policy for seniors, as well as the action plan that ties in with the policy. A monitoring committee will be created in order to implement the initiatives provided for in the action plan.

## 5. Portrait of the Pontiac Senior citizens



A questionnaire was sent to the entire population by mail in the fall of 2014 (205 citizens responded) and a public consultation was held in February of 2015 (71 participated). Both approaches for consulting the public enabled us to gather impressions of the senior citizens of

Pontiac, as far as what services should be adapted or implemented to improve their quality of life. The following findings were noted:

- The respondents were happy to be living in Pontiac, they feel safe and appreciate the natural setting and tranquility.
- The lack of services is one of the shortcomings of the municipality.
- The majority of respondents are socially active. Many social groups are fairly well known, but there could be more attendance. Certain services are unknown and could be better communicated.
- The majority of the respondents are self-sufficient and quite mobile.
- 65% of the respondents have confirmed wanting to live in Pontiac, even if they had limited means. These people especially wish to live in their own home with additional assistance, or to move into a smaller apartment or seniors' housing.
- The people who wish to live in their own homes would especially need help with property management and housekeeping.

## 6. Definition of senior citizen

Senior citizens are the witnesses and guardians of our cultural heritage and our history. They are individuals having lived various experiences who wish to share them with other generations. They are proud people and inspire respect and recognition by their community. Their needs, interests and aspirations vary according to their degree of autonomy, mobility, revenue and family support.

## 7. What is already existing in Pontiac

The Municipality of Pontiac is already implementing actions aiming to improve the quality of life of its senior citizens. These actions include:

- Support to organizations that offer activities for our senior citizens or who are fighting against social exclusion and poverty (financial contribution, loan of a hall, publicity, etc.).
- A study on the needs and the future of the Quyon Community Centre in order that it may notably meet the needs of senior citizens.
- Development of social policies that aim senior citizens in particular:
  - Local Action Plan for Solidarity and social inclusion (PALSIS)
  - MADA
  - Family policy

## 8. Values

The Pontiac Seniors municipal policy is based on the following values:

- **To Listen**: to be receptive to the constant evolution of the needs of our senior citizens, and therefore to contribute towards the realization of their aspirations.
- **Respect for the individual**: for each senior citizen to be treated with consideration and to recognize that each of them are individuals, while respecting their personal levels of activity.
- **Commitment**: so that the actions are consistent with the views.
- **Sustainable development** : to build a community, a balance needs to be struck taking into account the preservation and the best use of the environment, as well as consolidating the integration of the social fabric, among others, through the valorisation of families and a sound economic development.

## 9. Areas of intervention

The areas of intervention and the objectives on which the municipality will intercede are the following:

- **Communications** : To ensure that the senior citizens of Pontiac are better aware of municipal, community and institutional-based services.
- **Housing** : To offer a variety of dwelling units better adapted to the evolving needs of Pontiac's senior population. To foster home support for the senior citizens of Pontiac.
- **Health** : Facilitate access to health care services for Pontiac's senior population.
- **Social and community involvement**: To provide the municipality with an effective structure in terms of recreation and community development. To encourage a sense of pride and belonging to the municipality.
- **Transportation** : To improve the mobility of Pontiac's senior citizens, both within the municipality and in urban centres.
- **Infrastructures** : To equip the municipality with functional infrastructures for seniors that are pleasant.
- **Safety and isolation** : To ensure that senior citizens who are isolated or in vulnerable circumstances are more easily identified and supported.



## 10. Conclusion

These efforts, ending with the writing of this policy marks the beginning of another step, of which is the implementation of concrete actions for the senior citizens of the municipality. The action plan, for the duration of 3 years, will require extensive work and involvement on behalf of the community, elected representatives and the municipal personnel. We are confident that these actions will have a significant impact on the quality of life of Pontiac's senior citizens.



En partenariat avec :

