Call to Artists - Public Art Competition

Municipality of Pontiac

MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais Heritage Route

Photo credit: Brian Melbourne
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1. INTRODUCTION
The MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais is located in western Quebec. The region comprises seven municipalities: Cantley, Chelsea, L’Ange-Gardien, La Pêche, Notre-Dame-de-La-Salette, Pontiac and Val-des-Monts.

Artists who live in the Outaouais region of Quebec are invited to submit their credentials, examples of previous work, and a concept for a permanent sculpture for one of the dedicated sites located within each of the region’s municipalities. The sculpture will be integrated in a heritage route that will connect all seven municipalities of the MRC.

This call to artists specifically concerns the Municipality of Pontiac.

2. BACKGROUND
In 2010, a cultural policy for the MRC was adopted, along with Cultural Development Agreements between MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais and the Minister of Culture and Communications of Quebec. Several actions were identified in these agreements, including the development of routes that would highlight the historical, cultural, and natural heritage of the region.

Le Centre local de développement (CLD) de la MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais, via its Cultural Commission, developed a project to enhance its heritage: a heritage route in which a public art sculpture will be installed in every municipality on a site chosen for the importance of its heritage and history. The theme of water has been chosen as a common theme for the heritage route.

The project aims to achieve the following goals:

- highlight and make known the cultural and natural heritage of the MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais;
- encourage visitors and residents to follow heritage routes, and to take advantage of other offerings within the region;
- develop a feeling of pride and belonging in the MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais;
- integrate the project with regional efforts to promote Tourism Outaouais tourist route: Waterways (Les chemins d’eau);
- encourage visitors to come the region, and to stay longer;
- encourage economic development;
- offer visibility to the region’s artists and crafts people.

3. PROJECT VISION

THEME
The Municipality of Pontiac: a crossroads between rivers and hills

SITE
A place of passage for travelers and tourists, home of Native people and descendants of Europeans, meeting point of a population with varied origins, the Municipality of Pontiac can be described as a crossroads, the focal point of a rich heritage. The site chosen for this starting point of an heritage route, which aims to spark the interest of both visitors and residents, is a reflection of
this picture. Located near the Luskville Falls, on a terrace and former shore of the Champlain Sea, this site lets onlookers imagine the source, on the Escarpment, of this cascade which then meanders through the agricultural plain until it meets the great river.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT
The Municipality of Pontiac: nested between rivers and hills
When entering the territory of this municipality, the traveler is struck by two important geographical elements: in the South, the Ottawa River and in the North, the Eardley Escarpment. The contrast between these two landscape mainstays immediately catches the eye. Making up a truly beautiful landscape, this point of contact, this obvious delineation between the Ottawa lowlands and the Laurentian Plateau (Canadian Shield) testifies to the rich geological history of Pontiac.

Some 6,000 years ago, humans occupied this territory and shaped its elements (the river, the forest and the soil), giving birth to the transitional landscape we know today. Cradled between waters, agricultural lands, villages and hills, the Municipality of Pontiac is the focus point of a diversified natural and cultural heritage.

Before Man…
For long, the physical environment of the Ottawa valley was hostile to any human occupation. It is the result of a capricious geological evolution which can be divided in three overarching periods: the formation of the high mountain ranges, the invasion by the seas and the glaciations. Thus, a billion years ago, high mountains dominated the Ottawa area, and their erosion over hundreds of millions of years gave birth to the Laurentians. Sand and loam cover these mountains when seawater invades the North-American continent 570 million years ago. These sediments consolidate, forming the rocky foundations of the Ottawa lowlands. During the following millions of years, gigantic blocs of roc collapse on the fringe of the Canadian Shield, giving birth to the Eardley Escarpment.

Then, 1.6 million years ago, begins an alternation of glacial stages and warming stages. During the last glacial stage (20,000 years ago), an enormous continental glacier (Laurentide Ice Sheet) blankets the Ottawa region with 2,000 meters of ice. The passage of this ice sheet leaves numerous traces of erosion and accumulation, but also sinks the continent by several meters. Its melting causes a rise in the level of the oceans and lets the waters of the Atlantic rush in all the way into the Ottawa valley, thus creating the Champlain Sea. This sea covered the region up to an altitude of 200 meters 12,000 years ago. The Ottawa and Saint-Lawrence lowlands gradually dry up and finally become suitable for sufficient vegetal colonization to feed an herbivore fauna, which itself is eaten by the carnivores that Man will in turn hunt down, his presence on the banks of the Ottawa River at least 6,280 years ago being confirmed by archaeology.

Native populations
These human populations are at the heart of a large trade network spanning the American North-East. Indeed, numerous objects found in the region and analyzed by archaeologists would have been made from copper nuggets originating from the Lake Superior area and obtained through barter trade. As fishermen, these Natives have semi-permanent dwellings on certain sites along the river, where they build cemeteries amongst other things. 1,500 years ago, these groups adopt a ceramics tradition called Pointe-Péninsule which can be found in the state of New York, southern Quebec and southeastern Ontario, once again showing the extent of trade and population
movements. They also are, according to archaeologists, the ancestors of the Algonquin populations which form approximately 1,000 years ago. In their language, the Algonquin call themselves Anishinabeg, which means “human being” and, more specifically, “true men”.

The area now occupied by the Municipality of Pontiac is part of the historical territory of the Anishinabegs, which ran all along the Ottawa River up to Deep River. When Europeans arrived in the XVIIth century, the Anishinabegs control the river, which they call Kitchissippi (meaning Great River), one of the most important trade routes in North America.

Around 1650 however, decimated by the war with the Iroquois and by disease, the Algonquin lose the commercial control of the river to the Ottawa. For about two decades, the Ottawa will be the main intermediaries in the fur trade. After that, the European coureurs des bois go upriver to go themselves fetch furs in the West. Despite their ephemeral role, the Ottawa leave their name to the river, the region and the future capital city of the country. The same can be said of the most famous of their chiefs, Pontiac, born between 1712 and 1725 and murdered on April 20th, 1769. Despite giving his name to the Municipality and the electoral district it is a part of, there is little chance that he ever passed through. Famous war chief or the Detroit Ottawa, he heads a rebellion against the English during the French and Indian War.

European populations
Following Samuel de Champlain, several missionaries, explorers and travelers run up and down the river in canoes, stopping at the different trading posts that punctuate it, trading places where one goes to sell furs, to get supplies or simply to rest before or after one of the many portages. Towards the end of the XVIIIth century, one can thus stop at Pointe Mondion (Pointe à l’Indienne, Quyon sector), across from the Chats portage, and get supplies at the store of Joseph Mondion and his spouse Marguerite Charlebois. First Europeans to permanently settle on the banks of the Upper Ottawa River, they build a small wooden house, rear a few animals, cultivate the land and sell their product to the travelers. Located in a strategic place for trade activities, their property finds its way into the hands of large companies (notably the Hudson’s Bay Company), which keep a post there from 1800 to 1837.

The first residents arrive in the Municipality’s territory thanks to a new industry which will transform the economic face of the region: the harvesting of the forests of white and red pines. In the township of Onslow, open to settlement in 1805, the American Philemon Wright is granted 12,000 acres of land along the river and establishes in 1814 a logging camp in Pontiac Bay (South-West of Quyon). Towards 1840, in this same township (in the place called Beechgrove), John Christian Mohr, a Swedish immigrant, obtains several acres of land where he settles, builds a house and then a sawmill. The first settlers of the township of Eardley (open in 1806) are the Merriefield. They are followed by Daniel Sinclair in 1831 and Joseph Lusk (Irish Protestants) in 1832. These new inhabitants often combine forest and agricultural activities. Pontiac is also a melting pot of several origins: Irish, Scottish, English and French Canadian.

A place of passage and transition
As the XIXth century advances, a diversified population settles in the Ottawa lowlands. The great pine forests are harvested and replaced by agricultural lands. Until the late arrival of the railroad (in 1886), however, the river remains the primary means of travel for people and commodities. Around 1840, there are no terrestrial roads going beyond the township of Onslow. Aylmer Road, as it will be called later, was built by a lone man, Joseph Wyman Jr., who is said to have carried the mail by
horse (and then by diligence and sleigh in the winter) for almost 40 years between Aylmer and Portage-du-Fort.

On the river, steamboats link the eastern and western ends of the Municipality. As early as 1832, the Lady Colborne lets one travel from Aylmer to Fitzroy Harbour in Ontario. In 1846, entrepreneurs active in the Municipality (John Egan, Ruggles Wright and Joseph Aumond) establish the Union Forwarding Company and buy two steamboats. The first, the Emerald, serves Deschênes Lake, near Aylmer, and goes all the way to the Chats Falls (Quyon sector). On the other side of the Falls, which can be bypassed by a Horse Railway, the Oregon connects Chats Lake to Portage-du-Fort. The arrival of the railway marks the end of the water transport monopoly, although a steamboat service remains active until after the First World War. Thus, tourists may climb aboard the G.B. Greene, an elegant and spacious paddle steamer which brings them to the Chats Falls. In the same era, the Escarpment shows its mineral wealth with the discovery and development of one of the largest molybdenum deposits in the world.

Historical text: Maude-Emmanuelle Lambert

4. PROJECT SITE

The structure will be installed in front of the Pontiac Town Hall (2024, Highway 148, Pontiac).
View towards west

View towards south (in front of Town Hall)
5. DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

Design requirements for the sculpture that will be selected will:

- align conceptually with the theme chosen by the municipality (see section 3 of the present document);
- align conceptually with the theme of water, common theme for the MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais heritage route;
- integrate with the site’s landscape and heritage characteristics;
- engage site users;
- be safe for the public;
- be created of permanent materials that are suitable to the environment and that require minimal maintenance (NB: each municipality will carry out conservation and maintenance as deemed necessary to protect the artwork and will reserve the right to remove the artwork if it deteriorates beyond reasonable repair);
- take into consideration the environment and physical interactions that would affect the work, including but not limited to sunlight, winter, moisture, and wear from audience interaction; and
- comply with all applicable codes.
6. BUDGET

The budget for the sculpture is $15,000, including applicable taxes and the following:

- artist’s fee
- materials
- fabrication
- structural engineering advice, if applicable
- travel and meeting with the municipality
- installation
- liability insurance

The transportation of the sculpture to the site will be determined with the municipality, depending on the size and the location of the structure.

The municipality will be fully responsible for preparing the site and the base for the sculpture and will assist with anchoring the sculpture in place.

Note: The municipality will contribute additional funding to further beautify the sites with landscape integration elements and visitor amenities, such as picnic tables or benches, if appropriate. The artist is welcome to make suggestions to the municipality in that sense.

7. ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Artists who live in the Outaouais region are eligible. Preference will be given to artists submitting projects to the municipality in which they live. However, artists may submit proposals for more than one site.

The participants will be selected through a jury process to be held in each municipality. The jury’s evaluation criteria will include:

- artist’s residency (municipality);
- experience with outdoor public art;
- vision and originality of concept;
- understanding of the project’s goals;
- integration of the work with the site’s characteristics; and
- demonstrated adherence to schedules, deadlines, and project requirements, and budgets.

8. SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Submissions must include the components listed below. Acceptable file formats include DOC, DOCX, and PDF.

Submissions can be made electronically to a designated online file transfer. Please send an email indicating your intent to submit to echaure@cldcollines.org.
Submissions may also be dropped off at the CLD: **1694 Montée de la Source, Cantley.** They must be provided on CD or USB jump drive and clearly identified with the applicant’s name and contact information. Hard copies will not be accepted. USB sticks and CDs will not be returned.

**Submission components:**

- **One-page expression of interest,** which must include:
  - why you are interested in this opportunity (specify the name of the municipality in your submission);
  - what aspect of this public art commission inspires you;
  - what connects you and/or your work to the public art vision for this project.

- **One-page description of your art practice and how you would approach this project.**

- **Sketch and description of your proposed concept** (may be hand drawn or computer generated; should communicate the unique quality and originality of the concept, integration with the site, and visitor interactions, if applicable).

- **Two-page resumé** detailing education, public exhibitions, commissions, and any other relevant experience; include names of three references (preferably with whom you have worked).

- **A maximum of 10 digital image files of completed works or works in progress,** including fabrication and installation of public art projects; this should be accompanied by a list with details including your name, title, date, medium, dimensions, budget, and location. Label the images with your last name, and first initial followed by the viewing order that corresponds to your listing. (eg. SmithA_01.jpg). Acceptable formats include JPG, TIFF, and GIF with a maximum file size of 5 MB.

- **Artists can submit in French and in English.**

**9. DEADLINE**

**Deadline for submissions is Sunday, September 25 at midnight.**

Any submission received after the deadline will not be accepted. Please contact Claudine Chauret at **819-457-2121, ext.225** if you need assistance in making a submission electronically.

All participants will be notified of receipt of submissions as well as jury results.
10. QUESTIONS

Direct any questions to:

Claudine Chauret
Cultural development officer
CLD des Collines-de-l'Outaouais
819-457-2121 poste 225
cchauret@cldcollines.org

or

Dominic Labrie
Head of the Communications Department and Assistant to the Directorate-General
Municipalité de Pontiac
819-455-2401#136
labrie.dominic@municipalitepontiac.ca

11. PROJECT TIMELINE

Deadline for submissions: September 25 2016 at midnight.
Jury selection of finalists: October 2016
Municipal approval: November 8th 2016
Winning artist notified: November 9th 2016
Artist contract signed: November 2016
Completion of fabrication: May 31, 2017
Installation: June 2017 depending on weather conditions.
Unveiling: June 2017

12. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional historical Information

A) Reference materials, monographs and articles
Fletcher, Katharine, Capital Rambles, Exploring the National Capital Region (Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2004).
Gaffield, Chad, dir., Histoire de l'Outaouais (IQRC, 1997).
Leroux, Manon, L'autre Outaouais (Pièce sur pièce, 2012).
Robinson, James. "The Quio". How Quyon Came to Be (Dickson Press, 2006).
Taché, Louis et al. Le Nord de l’Outaouais (Le Droit, 1938).

B) Online resources
Heritage Pontiac (English notebook of Mo Laidlaw): http://www.heritagepontiac.ca/
Histoire, Patrimoine et éducation. Mot-clé: Histoire de l’Outaouais (French notebook of Lynne Rodier): https://histoirepatrimoineeducation.net/tag/histoire-de-loutaouais/
Outaouais’ Forest History (bilingual multimedia site developed by the Société d’histoire forestière du Québec): http://www.histoireforestiereoutaouais.ca/
La rivière des Outaouais : 400 ans de rencontres (exhibition of the Réseau du patrimoine gatinois): http://www.reseaupatrimoine.ca/
Répertoire du patrimoine bâti de l’Outaouais: http://patrimoineoutaouais.ca/

Copyright and Moral Rights
The sculptures created for this project will be owned by the municipality in which they are located. Copyright, including any and all designs, drawings, and final works of art shall remain the property of the artist. The artist must guarantee that the artwork is original and does not violate the copyright of any other person. Moral rights remain with the artist. MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais, Tourism Outaouais, and all seven municipalities will retain the right to distribute images of the works for the purposes of marketing and promotion.

Confidentiality
MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais and the jury members will treat the content of the proposals and the deliberations of the jury as confidential.

Cancellation
MRC des Collines-de-l’Outaouais reserves the right to not accept any of the proposals submitted, and to re-issue this Call to Artists.

13. CHECKLIST

- one-page expression of interest
- one-page description of your art practice
- sketch and description of concept
- two-page resumé
- maximum of 10 digital image files