

Press release  
For immediate release

**Maniwaki, June 17, 2020 – An AGM characterized by adaptation and continuity** – The Annual General Meeting of the Gatineau Valley SADC was held last June 16. For the first time in its almost 40-year history, the AGM was held by videoconference due to the pandemic. Having just reached a new agreement with the federal government, we began the year with the assurance of continuity for 5 years.

### Results

Pierre Monette, general manager of the Gatineau Valley SADC, chaired the meeting. He disclosed the results and accomplishments of the year ending March 31, 2020. During that period, investments totalling \$892,323 were made in 18 companies on the territory through its regular funds and the Youth Strategy, which helped create or maintain 110 jobs. There were 838 interventions in the form of follow-up or services, which completed its actions with companies in the Valley.

In terms of local development, human resources management and business succession activities were held, which enabled us to reach and equip more than 60 people with respect to these topics. The SADC team also took part in various activities intended for entrepreneurs and organized by regional partners. Last February at Expo Entrepreneurs 2020 in Montreal, Mr. Monette gave a presentation on the organization's initiatives aimed at supporting businesses as they go digital by offering workshops on the use of Facebook as a development tool, among other things. This event afforded great visibility to the Quebec regions, including the Gatineau Valley.

### COVID-19

As was the case in the entire community, the Gatineau Valley SADC, at the end of the fiscal year, had to confront and adapt to the situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

From March 25 to June 1, 2020, the entire team adjusted to working from home. From the start of the crisis, the Gatineau Valley SADC made tools available to assist companies in the region. As of March 31, 2020, \$155,000 in loans had been issued to 4 companies and 16 of SADC's business clients for a total of 25 loans. These loans came with a 3-month moratorium on principal and interest payments. Throughout the confinement period, the SADC team remained in contact with its clients to ensure that its actions were in synch with companies' needs.

### Other business

Several activities to support Gatineau Valley businesses had been scheduled for April 2020 but had to be postponed after the pandemic struck. Activities dealing with cybersecurity and opportunities represented by connected objects should take place later this year. The project to development business ties with the Ottawa-Gatineau region should also resume in 2020-2021. The project presenting possible nearby business models in villages should be completed shortly. Finally, support for the adoption of online business will become an important project for SADC given the situation created by COVID-19 and the reality experienced by businesses during this period.

#### On a closing note

In closing, André Galipeau, chair of the SADC Board of Directors, took advantage of the forum afforded him to thank the volunteer members of the board, who were often available and involved to offer support to the organization to adjust to the changes brought on by the crisis. He also highlighted the contributions partners made to the organization and the employees' devotion, who were able to meet the challenges created by the situation.

For more details on SADC achievements, the annual report is up on the organization's website at [www.sadc-vg.ca](http://www.sadc-vg.ca)

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