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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

High-speed internet

The MRC d'Argenteuil asking for \$9.5 M from the governments of Québec and Canada to connect its citizens and businesses

Lachute, April 20, 2017 – After long months of meticulous preparation, yesterday the MRC d'Argenteuil filed its application for the *Québec Branché* (provincial) and *Connect to Innovate* (federal) programs, with available funding of \$100 M and \$500 M respectively. The MRC d'Argenteuil's request is for a total of \$9.5 M to provide high-speed fiber optic internet connectivity for its citizens and businesses without access to this essential service.

With this ambitious, structuring and mobilizing project, the MRC d'Argenteuil anticipates reaching more than 3,500 households on its territory that are currently lacking reliable, affordable and adequate internet connectivity. In its application, the MRC opted for *Fiber-to-the-home* (FTTH) optical network technology, which offers superior performance over microwave technology, given the topography (valleys and mountains) and low population density of its territory.

The Council of the MRC d'Argenteuil has committed to setting up a non-profit organization (NPO) whose mission will be to operate, maintain and develop the optical FTTH network which, based on competitive rates, should reach target households and businesses. In addition to creating direct jobs during its first year of operation, the NPO will have strong development potential and should reach its break-even point in the medium term.

The MRC d'Argenteuil wishes to thank the population for its strong participation in the survey of interest and the internet speed tests launched last March. No less than 900 forms were completed by residents of Argenteuil, making it possible to precisely target needs while confirming the areas identified by the MRC as not having a high-speed internet connection. In this regard, the MRC would like to acknowledge the precious collaboration of its nine constituent municipalities during this important exercise.

Now that the applications have been officially submitted, the MRC d'Argenteuil will continue its efforts by seeking the support of Argenteuil MNA Yves St-Denis and Argenteuil-La Petite-Nation MP Stéphane Lauzon.

According to information available to the MRC, the projects selected by the governments of Québec and Canada should be announced in a few months.

It should be noted that access to high-speed internet promotes the development of businesses, tourism, agriculture and telework, thereby playing an indispensable role in the economic and social development of a community. It also makes a vital contribution to educational success, land occupancy and vitality, youth retention and attracting new families to the region.

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Source: MRC d'Argenteuil

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