

# **15-01: Cultural Policy**

of the

## **Beaubassin-est Rural Community**



**A close-knit community, proud to belong to a rural environment**

**July 20<sup>th</sup> 2015**

## **Table of Contents**

### ***Message from the Mayor***

### ***Preamble***

- 1. Beaubassin-est Community Profile**
- 2. Cultural Policy Statement**
- 3. Guiding Principles**
- 4. Directions**
- 5. Cultural Policy's Focus Areas**
  - Focus Area 1:** Supporting the Arts and Artists
  - Focus Area 2:** Promoting Cultural and Heritage Sites and Spaces
  - Focus Area 3:** Developing a Community Identity
- 6. Implementation Mechanisms**
- 7. Collaboration and Special Thanks**
- 8. Conclusion**

### ***Appendix***

#### ***Appendix 1: Definitions***

#### ***Appendix 2: Community Organizations***

#### ***Appendix 3: Bibliography***

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## Message from the Mayor



Cultural development is one of the Beaubassin-est Rural Community's main priorities. The municipal council members understand the importance of culture for the development of our municipality, because it not only contributes to the citizens' feeling of belonging, but also to the sustainable development of the community. The municipality has decided to adopt a cultural policy in order to further its involvement in the growth of its cultural landscape. It also allows us to create an identity reflecting the unique charm found in our wards.

There are many initiatives in Beaubassin-est, and the organizers are very creative and passionate. We want to support them, and work closely with them. The cultural policy will help determine how we can better support our organizations and their cultural and community activities. We also wish to protect the existing recreational and cultural facilities in the community so the entire population can benefit from them. With this policy, the municipality is committing to taking concrete actions to improve the cultural development. That will in turn enhance the community's vitality.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jean-Albert Cormier".

**Jean-Albert Cormier**  
Beaubassin-est Rural Community Mayor

## Preamble

The cultural policy adopted by the Beaubassin-est Rural Community is the best testimony of its commitment to celebrate arts and culture and to incorporate them into its strategic planning in order to ensure the development of services offered to its citizens. With the development of this policy, the Beaubassin-est Rural Community provides a framework for the long-term planning of services to be offered in the numerous sectors of arts and culture activities. The cultural policy also allows us to establish the priorities for using resources according and in response to the needs of citizens, as well as artistic and cultural stakeholders. It enables us to show our cultural particularities and distinctive features. It is also designed as a tool suited to support artists, as well as economic, tourism, social, and community development.

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## **1. Beaubassin-est Rural Community Profile**

### ***1.1 A community rich in history***

Incorporated in 2006, the Beaubassin-est Rural Community is one of the first communities in New Brunswick to regroup as a rural community, and is today the fourth largest municipal entity in Southeastern New Brunswick with its more than 6,200 residents. Beaubassin-est is majorly francophone and is located in the Micmac historical territory where Acadians have lived since 1754. That means more than 250 years of history with sectors bearing old French or Indian names like the Kagibougouète and Tidiche rivers, Aboujagane, Chimouguoi (now called Shemogue), and Barachois (French Acadian word describing a body of water separated from the ocean by a sandbank).

### ***1.2 Six wards with their individual particularities***

The municipality is divided in six wards (Botsford, Saint-André-LeBlanc, Grand-Barachois, Boudreau-Ouest, Haute-Aboujagane, and Cormier-Village) on a large 291km<sup>2</sup> area. These wards have their individual particularities; some run along the eastern part of New Brunswick's coastline, with their beautiful beaches and cliffs, while others are located in the woods of Aboujagane, which covers the majority of the Beaubassin-est area. This region also boasts large areas of wetland, with peatland producing one of the best peat moss in the world. In addition, Beaubassin-est has beautiful agricultural farms, orchards, and nurseries that define this rural region. There are also many natural attractions like the Kagibougouète River (Kouchibouguac), a great spot for trout fishing.

Located on the coastal zone, Beaubassin-est has an enormous fishing fleet and is known for its smoked herring drying plants. Lobster fishing also contributes to the area's socioeconomic development. Many wharfs are staggered along the coast and are closely linked to the residents of their communities, plus they are part of the cultural landscape of the area.

### ***1.3 Protecting the heritage***

Thanks to the citizens' involvement, Beaubassin-est was able to protect the oldest existing Acadian wooden church. The Barachois Historical Church built in 1824, the Haute-Aboujagane Sacré-Cœur Church built in 1874, and the Shemogue Saint-Timothée Church built in 1903 are part of the cultural legacy. Moreover, the Cormier-Village small school built around 1880 has been restored through the efforts of the Mer Rouge Historical Society and of the residents. Cemeteries are of a very great importance to Acadian history. A cemetery located in Grand-Barachois could be of interest for archaeological research linked to the first Acadian settlement. This old cemetery (1812-1826) has recently been restored and a commemorative plaque now marks the location. It is also worth mentioning the regional cultural development project, aiming to celebrate the multi-generational importance of wharfs in our communities.

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### **1.4 Numerous assets for cultural and tourism development**

The Beaubassin-est Rural Community can count on numerous assets to support the development of citizens, to promote its heritage and history and to offer a rich and diversified cultural menu to tourists. See the following examples:

#### **Engaged citizens**

- The contribution of citizens organizing multiple cultural activities and preserving heritage sites and buildings;
- The presence of a large number of seasoned artisans and artists in the region adds to the cultural awareness of the area;
- The construction of a monument to commemorate victims of the tragic Cormier-Village accident that took place in 1989.

#### **Infrastructures**

- Several cultural and sports centres, golden age clubs, and community halls that allow citizens to gather for cultural and community activities;
- An art gallery located in the Barachois Historical Church;
- Several churches in the heart of the localities that compose the municipality;
- A school with more than 300 young francophone elementary students.

#### **Tourism assets**

- The proximity of the Parlee Beach Provincial Park and its vast natural habitat as well as the Murray Beach Provincial Park;
- The beautiful landscape alongside the coast of eastern New Brunswick and of Beaubassin-est is a definite asset for the citizens' well-being and for tourism development;
- About thirty smokehouses in the region where the public can discover the traditional fish-drying methods;
- A golf course (the only 36-hole golf course in the province) that reflects the true beauty of Beaubassin-est's rural landscape;
- Cemeteries that have become genealogical research centres for visitors looking for their ancestors;
- Outdoor activities such as hiking trails, ice fishing, bird watching, kayaking;
- An Ecopark Centre, which is a network of trails developed in the forest, and designed as an educational tool for good environmental practices.

#### **Promotion of the arts**

- Summer Music at the Barachois Historical Church is a cultural jewel for Acadie and Southeastern New Brunswick. It's one of the few classical music summer shows in the Atlantic Provinces;
- Several regular and annual cultural activities like the Grand bazar-à-choix, displaying the artisanal talents of community members, the Shediac Bay Studio Tour, the "Celebrate our Wharves" program with its musical performances on the wharves, the Jam Series, highlighting our local talent, and New Brunswick's Cultural Coast;
- The Belivo Studio in Grand-Barachois is a professional recording studio for artists from the province and elsewhere.

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### **Community organizations**

- Cultural organizations like the Mer Rouge Historical Society and the Sud-Acadie Cultural Society are true partners in cultural development;
- Various regional organizations are very active in the community and hold numerous activities for the citizens' well-being;
- A daily newspaper (L'Acadie Nouvelle), and two weekly newspapers (Le Moniteur acadien and L'Étoile), regularly report on cultural events in the Beaubassin-est region. The Radio-Beauséjour radio station also plays an important role in the community.

### **Partnership agreements**

- Exchanges with the neighboring communities of Cap-Pelé, Pointe-du-Chêne, and Shediac make it possible for the citizens to share various services like summer camps for children;
- The access to two public libraries (Cap-Pelé and Shediac) helps reading development among young people;
- The Village of Cap-Pelé and Beaubassin-est Rural Community Watershed Group Vision H<sub>2</sub>O and the Shediac Bay Watershed Association are working on various environmental projects to maintain a healthy ecosystem in order to have quality water.

### ***1.5 Identifying the needs required to ensure the cultural development of our community***

Beaubassin-est has to evaluate its approach and acquire tools to achieve a better oversight of present and future initiatives. An initial review allows us to determine the clearly identified needs required to launch the cultural policy.

- Because Beaubassin-est consists of various grouped rural communities, it needs to create a community identity and a feeling of belonging, while preserving the individual sectors' particularities;
- An innovative and unifying project would give an identifying image to Beaubassin-est and would enable citizens to be proud of their culture and of their community;
- The community has access to neighboring towns' library services, but it would be beneficial to residents if they could benefit from quality library services right in their own community. It would also foster their sense of belonging;
- The cultural installations and infrastructures currently offered in the community could be further improved and exploited;
- Tools encouraging residents and tourists to discover the beauty of the cultural landscape and of the richness of the heritage should be available in a catalogue format, and online. It could include: a list of activities and things to do and see in the municipality like monuments, sculptures, historical sites, parks, wharves, etc.;
- A communications plan to better inform citizens of the progress of arts and culture integration in the Beaubassin-est Rural Community.

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## **2. Cultural Policy Statement**

The cultural policy of the Beaubassin-est Rural Community is designed as a tool suited for all stakeholders in every sector involved in the community's cultural development. With this policy, the Beaubassin-est Rural Community and all partners assume joint responsibility for the preservation of the community's heritage and cultural development.

## **3. Guiding Principles**

The Cultural Policy of the Beaubassin-est Rural Community is guided by the principles set out below. These principles bring with them dynamism for the development of our cultural identity and serve as a source of inspiration for our decisions and actions relating to the arts and culture.

### **Our culture, our heritage and our history at the heart of our identity**

- Beaubassin-est recognizes the contribution of culture, heritage and history in the definition of its identity and believes the development of the cultural sector will help foster the feeling of belonging for its citizens in the community.

### **Shared responsibility and partnership**

- Beaubassin-est assumes a leadership role in the community's cultural development while recognizing and benefiting from the contribution of the community as a whole, of cultural stakeholders, and of public and private sector funders.

### **Supporting artists, cultural stakeholders and volunteers**

- Beaubassin-est supports its artists and cultural workers, and they are recognized as ambassadors of the community's cultural dynamism. The municipality is aware of the important role of volunteers to support cultural activities in the area, and wishes to support their efforts.

### **Community development**

- Beaubassin-est supports community and cultural development within each of the municipality's wards, while encouraging a collaborative culture between these sectors, the neighboring communities, the educational and cultural institutions, and the community as a whole.

### **Sustainable development**

- Investments in the cultural sector will benefit the entire population, will create a distinctive image of our community and will foster our economic development while supporting our citizens' growth.

### **Cultural life participation and accessibility**

- Beaubassin-est wants to make participation to cultural life more accessible for citizens, whether in school, out-of-school and as part of community activities. Access to diversified cultural experiences is essential to the development of a dynamic and inclusive cultural area, no matter the age, social status, and language of the population.

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### 4. Directions

The directions and goals set out in the policy will guide the cultural choices and decisions made by Council in the coming years. They will allow for effective coordination of our actions with those of our partners in addition to surely bringing about new initiatives from community stakeholders. The Cultural Policy of the Beaubassin-est Rural Community will enable the community to develop a sense of pride and belonging by becoming aware of the extent and dynamism of the local culture. Youth will be able to grasp a better understanding of the community's building blocks as well as gain the feeling of belonging.

This policy outlines the cultural intervention under three main focus areas that include the sectors of activities favored by the policy, namely: supporting the arts and artists, promoting cultural and heritage sites and spaces and developing a community identity. Each focus area presents a description of its directions, its goals, as well as its specific commitments. It is important to stress that the three focus areas are not presented in a particular order of priority. On the contrary, each one of them is important and will need to be developed in the implementation action plan. The implementation strategies, including the assessment mechanisms, complete this section.

### 5. Cultural Policy's Focus Areas

The efforts of the working committee for this cultural policy and the consultations in the community made it possible to identify the directions, the goals and the specific commitments for each of the three focus areas. This will serve as the basis for the elaboration of a cultural action plan, as well as help the municipality in its dedication to integrate arts and culture in the community.

#### Focus Area 1: SUPPORTING THE ARTS AND ARTISTS

##### Directions

Numerous artists, some with an international reputation, have chosen to settle in Beaubassin-est: visual artists, musicians, writers, filmmakers, poets. These artists are true ambassadors of the community, which is why it is important to support them in their efforts and to recognize their contribution to community development. The work and creativity of our many artists are also cultural facets to be discovered and developed.

For many years, Beaubassin-est has been hosting cultural events made possible with the involvement of dedicated cultural organizations. Many of these events need to be maintained and promoted. For example, Barachois Historical Church's **Summer Music** is one of the few classical music summer shows in the Atlantic Provinces. More examples are the visual arts exhibitions or art events at the **Léon-Léger Gallery**, the "Jam" series musical performances, the **l'Grand bazar-à-choix** and the innovative **Celebrate our wharves** project. All these cultural activities showcase the enormous talent of our region's artists and artisans.



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**Goals**

The general goals pertaining to supporting the arts and artists are:

- Support cultural organizations and circles who want to integrate arts and culture.
- Support the work of artists by organizing popular or cultural events in partnership with cultural organizations.
- Support initiatives that have an added value for the artistic development of citizens, and especially youth.
- Further promote the exceptional talent of the artists, artisans and cultural entrepreneurs that have chosen to settle down in Beaubassin-est.
- Encourage the optimal use of cultural installations and infrastructures (Golden Age Clubs, community centres, art galleries, etc.)

**Commitments**

- In collaboration with neighboring communities, Beaubassin-est will create a directory of artists and artisans of the area. This directory will be available on the municipality's website.
- The municipality commits to introduce mechanisms to support and promote cultural activities held in the area, as well as endorse local talent.
- Beaubassin-est will raise awareness on the added value of a cultural component to a project for all community partners of different fields (sports, environment, commercial, etc.)
- The municipality will encourage diverse cultural sector stakeholders to consult each other in order to promote its cultural infrastructures and to develop technical equipment available to the various community and cultural centres.

**Focus Area 2: PROMOTING CULTURAL AND HERITAGE SITES AND SPACES**

**Directions**

Any Acadian construction from the early 19th century consists of a rare and important aspect of Acadie's heritage. The Beaubassin-est territory is intimately linked to the beginning of colonization in Acadie. The Barachois Historical Church, the Barachois dykes and the region's cemeteries bear witness to our ancestors' past. The construction of Acadian houses along the Shediac and Cap-Pelé coastline is well documented, and these publications shed a very interesting light on the history of the municipality and of the region.

Beaubassin-est recognizes the importance of cultural tourism in the community's global development and plans on taking all necessary measures to promote this type of tourism. We need to continue the efforts in order to celebrate and preserve our human heritage and our history. Adopting measures to increase awareness on this important aspect of our culture and our identity is also essential.

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### **Goals**

The general goals pertaining to promoting cultural and heritage sites and spaces are:

- Value and support the preservation of the community's heritage sites and spaces.
- Acknowledge the men and women of the founding people (Acadians, Anglophones and First Nations) that are part of our municipality's history.
- Help citizens, youth and tourists discover the churches, cemeteries, wharves and sites representing the heritage legacy and cultural landscape of the community and the region.

### **Commitments**

- The municipality intends to continue its efforts and investments in listing, preserving and promoting its heritage sites and spaces.
- In collaboration with organizations such as New Brunswick Cultural Coast or in dialogue with neighboring communities, Beaubassin-est will develop cultural tourism as a cultural identity development tool to endorse the region's rich heritage and cultural landscape.

## **Focus Area 3: DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY IDENTITY**

### **Directions**

Community identity can be broadly defined as an emotional attachment or feeling of belonging to a geographical region. These terms may also relate to a community of interest. Since Beaubassin-est is composed of six wards with individual particularities, the municipal council should find ways to promote the municipality as a whole and to establish a community identity for its citizens. In order to achieve this, the Rural Community of Beaubassin-est will encourage meetings and sharing between citizens of various sectors to strengthen the community identity. The municipality will also strive to identify an innovative and mobilizing project to further develop the community's sense of belonging.

### **Goals**

The general goals pertaining to developing a community identity are:

- Ensure the influence of art in every ward of the community.
- Encourage meetings and sharing between citizens of various sectors.
- Work in concert with regional schools and public libraries to introduce an emphasis on the development of literacy and cultural identity.

### **Commitments**

- With inspiration from various cultural intervention models, like cultural mediation or regional cultural development, Beaubassin-est will encourage cultural workshops and activities in senior citizens' homes, in schools, at the Léon-Léger Gallery, in Golden Age Clubs, in community centres, on the Ecopark trails, etc. These cultural actions will create gathering places for the citizens and youth of the six wards of the municipality so they can meet, interact and get to know one another.

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- In collaboration with the principal's office of the Père-Edgar-T.-LeBlanc School, the management team of the Cap-Pelé and Shediac libraries, the District scolaire francophone Sud, and in partnership with some community organizations, the municipality aims to explore the possibility of a gathering place mainly for reading and writing activities. This creation and learning centre will be accessible to all community residents, and training and artistic creation workshops could be offered.
- The municipal council intends to place the Arts & Culture component on the agenda on a recurring basis, and to continue the same meeting approach, which is rotating the meeting location between all wards.

## **6. Implementation Mechanisms**

The implementation of this cultural policy must be based on a concerted effort made by every community of interest (culture, education, private, public, business, youth sectors, and municipal government) and must be able to count on the input of representatives of citizens of all ages. A culture of partnership must be created in order to achieve the intended goals. In close collaboration with the municipality, setting up a committee in charge of planning and guiding the cultural actions will ensure the policy gets implemented. This committee will be mandated to make sure the main aspects of the municipality's response in terms of culture are reflected, in accordance with the resources made available, in an action plan. Moreover, this policy is meant to be progressive and it will therefore be important to implement a data collection and assessment system.

## **7. Collaboration and Special Thanks**

The Beaubassin-est Rural Community wishes to thank everyone that participated in developing the municipality's first cultural policy, especially all members of the working committee mandated for research and drafting of the policy. The municipality wishes to highlight the involvement of the Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick, the Association acadienne des artistes professionnel.le.s du Nouveau-Brunswick, as well as the Les Arts et la Ville organization, and expresses gratitude to the support staff that has shared their expertise and leadership for the creation of the cultural policy.

### **Working Committee:**

André Bourque: Councillor, Ward 3  
Carole Landry: Community Services Officer, Beaubassin-est  
Charline Landry: Service Manager, Beaubassin-est  
Christine LeBlanc: Chief Administrative Officer, Beaubassin-est  
Gilles Cormier: Councillor, Ward 2  
Herménégilde Chiasson: Multidisciplinary Artist  
Jean-Albert Cormier: Mayor, Beaubassin-est  
Joanne LeBlanc Skyrie: Sud-Acadie Cultural Society  
Line Godbout: Cultural Consultant  
Marlene Dugas: Cultural Events Organizer  
Maryse LeBlanc: Outgoing Mayor

### **Support Staff:**

Mario Doucet: Project Manager, Association francophone des municipalités du N.-B.  
Nancy Juneau: Art Development Consultant  
Paul Lemay: Consultant, Les Arts et la Ville  
René Cormier: Artist and Art Development Consultant, AAAPNB

## **8. Conclusion**

We all recognize the importance of cultural life in maintaining and developing our living environment. We must preserve our heritage, encourage creativity, give a new momentum to our cultural initiatives, and allow each and every one of us to flourish.

## **APPENDIX 1: DEFINITIONS**

**Note: Most of the following definitions are taken from A Renewed Cultural Policy for New Brunswick – 2014**

### **Regional Cultural Development**

Approach that makes cultural development a central rallying point for all sectors of a community for the purpose of developing and implementing strategies for the integration of art, culture, and heritage in the region.

### **Art**

A process of human creation or invention of an original idea with aesthetic content. For the purpose of this policy, the arts are defined as including the visual arts, the literary arts, crafts, music, theatre, dance, performance, media arts, architecture and interdisciplinary arts. A work of art is produced by the transformation of an original idea through the artist's skill, technique and knowledge.

### **Professional artist**

An individual who practices an art and aspires to earn a living thereby, who offers his or her services as a creator or performer in one or more arts disciplines in return for remuneration, who has undertaken a course of accredited or equivalent training in the field of the art discipline and/or who is recognized by his or her peers.

### **Professional heritage association**

A non-profit organization whose aim is to improve and support those working in the areas of museums, historic sites, archaeology, heritage preservation and archives, through activities related to policy development, professional development and standards, information sharing and heritage advocacy.

### **Rural community**

Municipality model whose aim is to provide residents of rural areas in New Brunswick the opportunity to choose a form of local government adapted to their reality, and allows them to be responsible for local services at their own pace and at an affordable price.

### **Culture**

In the broad sense, culture means anything that pertains to the way of life of the people, of a given group or of a civilization. It can include, but not be limited to language, beliefs, heritage, customs, traditions, and creative expression. For the purposes of this cultural policy, the word "culture" includes human and natural heritage, arts and cultural industries and enterprises.

### **Professional arts organization or company**

A non-profit organization dedicated to the creation, production or dissemination of art on a professional basis.

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**Cultural mediation**

The term “cultural mediation” is used to describe cultural action strategies focused on situations of exchange and on meetings between the citizens and the arts and culture communities.

**Cultural landscape**

A cultural landscape is a group of ideas and practices contained in a location. The “ideas and practices” consist of the “cultural” element of the concept, while the “location” is the element that makes it a landscape. These locations can be of the urban, rural or wild nature, and their size can vary from a small urban location to an area of several thousand square kilometers.

## **Appendix 2: Community Organizations**

The following community organizations are linked to art and culture development in Beaubassin-est.

Barachois Historical Church  
Belivo Studio  
Caisse populaire Sud-est - Barachois  
Cap-Pelé Knights of Columbus, Council # 9178, Rev. Donat-Robichaud  
Cap-Pelé Public Library  
Cap-Pelé/Beaubassin-est Chamber of Commerce  
Club des femmes de carrières du Sud-est du N.-B.  
Cormier Village Cultural and Sports Centre  
Cormier-Village Ecopark  
Cormier-Village Golden Age Club  
De la Brèche Wharf  
Donat-Robichaud School in Cap-Pelé  
Grand bazar-à-choix Organizing Committee  
Grand-Barachois Golden Age Club  
Grand-Barachois Hall  
Grand-Barachois Knights of Columbus, Council # 10251, Père-Edgar-T.-LeBlanc  
Greater Shediac Chamber of Commerce  
Haute-Aboujagane Golden Age Club  
Haute-Aboujagane Hunting and Fishing Club  
Haute-Aboujagane Knights of Columbus, Council # 10319, Raoul Léger  
Léon-Léger Art Gallery  
Louis-J.-Robichaud Foundation  
Louis-J.-Robichaud School in Shediac  
Mer Rouge Historical Society  
Mgr-François-Bourgeois School in Shediac  
New Brunswick Cultural Coast  
Père-Edgar-T-LeBlanc School in Grand-Barachois  
Petit-Cap Wharf  
Pine Needles Golf Club  
Robichaud Wharf  
Sacré-Cœur Parish in Haute-Aboujagane  
Saint-André-LeBlanc Community Centre  
Sainte-Thérèse d'Avila Parish in Cap-Pelé  
Saint-Henri Parish in Grand-Barachois  
Saint-Timothée Parish in Shemogue  
Shediac Bay Watershed Association  
Shediac Public Library  
Shemogue Golden Age Club  
Sud-Acadie Cultural Society  
Vision H<sub>2</sub>O/ Village of Cap-Pelé and Beaubassin-est Rural Community Watershed Group

### **Appendix 3: Bibliography**

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