

Dundee
Elgin
Franklin
Godmanchester

Havelock
Hinchinbrooke
Howick
Huntingdon

Ormstown
Saint-Anicet
Saint-Chrysostome
Sainte-Barbe
Très-Saint-Sacrement



CULTURAL POLICY

2017 EDITION



MRC du
HAUT-SAINT-LAURENT

Adopted on February 8, 2017



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1. MESSAGE FROM THE PREFECT

Dear Citizens,

On behalf of my colleagues, the mayors of the thirteen municipalities that make up the MRC, and in my personal capacity, I am very pleased to present the second edition of the Cultural Policy for the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent.

This second edition represents a genuine account of the dynamic cultural reality of the Haut-Saint-Laurent. Revised and improved, the policy is addressed first of all to the citizens of the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent, who are not only the main consumers, but also the protectors of our heritage and our culture. It is also addressed to all creators, producers, cultural organizations and workers, and of course to the elected municipal officials, who are essential partners.

The successful implementation of this cultural policy and the attainment of its objectives will rely upon the direct involvement of citizens, as well as elected officials and numerous cultural stakeholders. Its recent adoption represents a commitment for all to the future of the MRC and a recognition of culture in all its many forms.

On behalf of the Council of Mayors of the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent, I would like to thank all those who contributed to the preparation and writing of this modernized cultural policy. It is thanks to these efforts that the trajectory for the cultural development of the MRC has once again been clearly defined.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Lebrun'.

Louise Lebrun
Prefect for the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent



2. PREAMBLE

The context

In the wake of the provincial government's adoption of the Québec Cultural Policy in 1992 and the powers it conferred on the municipal sector, the Regional Municipal County of the Haut-Saint-Laurent (MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent) adopted its first cultural policy in 2001.

This first cultural policy, which was the result of broad consultation within the cultural milieu, and with the resolute support of the 13 municipalities, had a pronounced impact on regional dynamics.

The policy allowed for the establishment of permanent cultural resources, stakeholder consultation, and an increase and diversification in cultural programming and projects, support for development projects, access to funding and the integration of culture into broader territorial development plans.

Following a recommendation included in this first cultural policy, the development committee was transformed into a permanent monitoring committee. Under the coordination of the cultural development officer, this interdisciplinary advisory committee, in accordance with its mandate, has been meeting regularly since 1998 to advise elected officials, to stimulate their willingness to include the cultural dimension in regional development, and to ensure that decisions relating to culture are in line with the cultural policy and its action plan.

A cultural policy is a reflection of its time, and as it introduces change, it too must evolve. Over the last few years, the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent has experienced many changes imposing new constraints, posing new challenges and creating new opportunities: demographic and socio-economic changes; developments in the world of communications; new infrastructure, changes more specific to the cultural sector such as those stemming from the achievements of the 2001 cultural policy; regional consultation within the Conférence régionale des élus de la Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent (CRÉ VHSL) from 2004 to 2014; the development of new heritage sites; a new Provincial Cultural Heritage Act; and the adoption of Agenda 21 for Culture by the provincial government. It became evident that the cultural policy had to be updated, and the cultural committee was given the mandate to do so.



A Cultural Vision

The municipal governance bodies and their elected representatives are close to their citizens. None are more attentive to their needs and expectations on a daily basis. Their capacity to manage current municipal functions and to meet the practical needs of citizens is great. However, their ability to influence behavior, raise awareness and mount concern for common issues, by way of focus-driven policies, is easily forgotten. It is from this perspective that a cultural policy should draw its inspiration, for culture, although inherent to all sectors, remains a secondary consideration. Yet, much more than a market, or an industry,

it is a living environment, an ecosystem, an organized and expanding body of knowledge that conditions our thoughts, our behaviors and our reactions, and ultimately determines our thinking and our human ecology.

As a cultural policy gives rise to concrete actions, it is important to ensure a practical dimension is included alongside the philosophical in its definition. For the purposes of the cultural policy, culture must also be considered in terms of the means through which it is most often accessed and expressed, namely, the arts, education and communication.

By way of a municipal cultural policy, elected officials affirm their capacity and willingness to recognize culture as a fundamental element within their community. They are equipping themselves with a tool that provides a trajectory for planning and action that will allow for the integration of culture into their overall mission and jurisdiction. From a sustainable development perspective, the development of each of these sectors goes hand in hand with cultural development. The territory and its development are human and cultural constructions. Tourism development is based, among other things, on landscapes and a rich diversity of cultural activities. Access to culture is an element of social cohesion and individual fulfillment. All cultural activities represent a significant economic contribution to a community. For the year 2015, the ratio of direct economic benefit to municipalities and the MRC for maintaining a cultural policy was 1.6. As such, every dollar invested is worth \$1.60 in the community.



Methodology

Initial discussion with the Cultural Committee: 2011

Attribution of the mandate by the Council of Mayors: January 2012

Work sessions by the Cultural Committee:

- 18/10/12 (inventory of resources)
- 30/08/12 (inventory of resources)
- 12/03/12 (adoption of the work plan)
- 16/06/14 (validation of parts 2 and 3)
- 14/03/16 (planning of consultation by questionnaires)
- 03/08/16 (validation of the survey and sections 2, 3 and 4)
- 30/01/17 (validation of sections 5 and 6)

Consultation:

- Questionnaires specific to four target groups between April 25 and May 16, 2016

Participation in the consultation:

- Citizens 538/9,693 doors (5.55%)
- Artists 19/69
- Cultural organizations 14/21
- Municipalities 13/13



3. THE TERRITORY

Physical Geography

Located in the extreme southwest of Quebec, the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent covers an area of 1,174 km² (Statistics Canada 2011) that stretches from east to west for some 68 kilometers. Its boundaries are the New York State border to the south, the Saint Lawrence River to the northwest, and the Beauharnois-Salaberry and Jardins-de-Napierville MRCs to the northeast.

The majority (94%) of the territory is zoned agricultural. Approximately one third of this agricultural area is under forest cover. Agriculture is the fabric of the landscape and varies according to the potential and quality of the soil. Field crops in the Saint Lawrence Lowlands run from the north to the gravelly terraces of Covey Hill, a foothill to the Adirondacks, suitable for maple syrup production and apple growing. It is here, on the border of the United States, that Covey Hill, the highest point in the MRC, sits 340 meters above sea level.

Several rivers and streams feed and drain the soil of this territory, but it is mainly the shores of Lake Saint-François and the Chateauguay River that structure its geography.



Human Geography

The MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent is part of the administrative region of the Montérégie and includes 13 municipal governments, including the townships of Dundee, Godmanchester and Havelock; The municipalities of Elgin, Franklin, Hinchinbrooke, Howick, Ormstown, Saint-Anicet, Saint-Chrysostome and Sainte-Barbe; The parish of Très-Saint-Sacrement; And the town of Huntingdon. It also covers the Quebec portion of the Akwesasne Mohawk Reserve and its many islands on Lake Saint-François.

It is important to note here that between 2003 and 2014, the Government of Québec entrusted regional development to the Conférence régionale des élus (regional conferences of elected representatives (CRÉ)). The MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent was included as part of the Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent CRÉ. For the purpose of regional comparative analysis, the MRCs were often classified into four types: central, peripheral, intermediate and remote (Fernand Harvey and Andrée Fortin, 1995). The Montérégie is classified in the peripheral category, that is, being close to major urban centers. In reality, the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent, by virtue of being geographically isolated and deprived of major highways, shares many characteristics with that of an intermediate region. The socio-economic indicators, however, would tend to classify the south-western portion of the MRC as a remote region.

Socio-demographic profile

	Haut-Saint-Laurent	Province of Québec	Brome-Missisquoi	Jardins-de-Napierville
Total population	21 197	–	–	–
Population Density	18.1 pop./km ²	–	33.7 pop./km ²	32.7 pop./km ²
Population change	-3.4% (2006-2011)	+4.7% (2006-2011)	–	–
Age group 0-14	14.3%	15.85%	–	–
Age group 15-64	66.2%	67.9%	–	–



Language spoken most often at home

French	67%
English	33%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2012. The Haut-Saint-Laurent, Québec (Code 2469) and Québec (Code 24) (table). Census Profile, 2011 Census, Statistics Canada catalog no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released on 24 October 2012. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed June 16, 2016).

Percentage of workforce by highest level of educational attainment

No diploma	31.2%
High School Diploma	23.8%
Diploma from a trade school	17.8%
College diploma	14.1%
University degree	11.5%

Percentage of the workforce by industrial sector

Primary sector	12.4%
Services	66.2%
Construction	7.6%
Manufacturing	10.5%

Source: Statistics Canada. 2013. Haut-Saint-Laurent, MRC, Québec (Code 2469) (table). Profile of the National Household Survey (NHS), National Household Survey, 2011, Catalog no. 99-004-XWE. Ottawa. Released on September 11, 2013. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=F> (site accessed June 17, 2016).

Natural and cultural development

If we examine our region through a geo-historical lens, it has experienced just two extended periods: prehistory with native occupation and colonization with the phases of clearing, subsistence farming, family farming, and finally the intensive agriculture that we know today. Francophone settlement began on the banks of the river at the end of the eighteenth century. Scottish and Irish immigrants settled inland following the War of 1812. Due in no small part to the ability to travel along waterways, the flow of the Chateauguay River, and later the arrival of the railway, industrial centres providing work for locals expanded and declined over the years. In addition to agriculture, logging, potash production, livestock production, a dairy industry, agricultural equipment manufacturing, brickworks and the textile industry have all contributed to the region's prosperity. The latter activity, which had been in decline at the end of the 20th century, abruptly ended in 2005. Agriculture remains the economic engine driving the MRC. A significant holiday and water sports area developed along the banks of the river starting in the 20th century.

The landscape is interspersed with small hamlets, which are small concentrations of dwellings that resulted from the development of various communities. These hamlets, as well as ancestral stone houses, centuries-old farms, numerous churches and natural areas, are all elements that constitute a well-preserved built and natural heritage. The fact these mostly remain occupied by landowners is the reason behind the preservation of this heritage, as the farmers shaped it through the exploitation of agricultural resources, and those living in these homes took care of their residential space. It goes without saying that this environment exudes a quality of life.





The artistic and cultural activity within this region is conditioned by its rurality and biculturalism. First occupied by Iroquoian settlements, then by Catholic Francophones and Catholic and Protestant Anglophones, the region has remained essentially agricultural and, apart from deforestation, has changed very little over time. This has allowed for the region to maintain the homogeneity of its landscapes as well as a wealth of archaeological sites and built heritage, both religious and utilitarian. Much of its current population is descended from the first landed immigrants. There is a perceived sense of belonging and a sense of community. The absence of large urban centres has encouraged the preservation of artistic and cultural practices steeped in tradition. This perseverance is a guarantee of quality. Of course, modern transport and information technologies have opened the region to the world. New media has brought about a varied visual culture and has led to the population becoming accustomed to hybridization and the mixing of genres. Despite this, contemporary art does not feature in the local arts community.

The aspect of terroir and of rural tradition has been highlighted by the *Circuit du Paysan*, the first clearly defined tourist route in Quebec (1998). There is also a good-sized pool of musicians, mostly amateurs, who keep the popular Anglo-American tradition of folk music alive and well, with the exception of pipers, who maintain a purist style. During collective events, the rustic and natural character of the Haut-Saint-Laurent is all the more apparent as it is celebrated by painters and sculptors.

Relatively low land occupation has favoured the conservation of sites with considerable archaeological value, which is highlighted by specific programs. It is also important to note the diffusion of new electronic media has been slowed due to geographic limitations. The situation is improving over time; however, Internet service is lagging behind in the MRC. A survey of municipal administrations revealed nine of thirteen found the service to be unsatisfactory, while the remaining four considered it to be satisfactory. None found the service to be very satisfactory. (Appendix 1)



In summary, the region is characterized by an attachment to history, tradition and nature. As its social and cultural activities are difficult to export, the area is bolstered by a desire to attract visitors and efforts are being made to this effect.

Since 2001, a cultural policy has been in force, and a cultural development officer has been employed. The MRC's main area of interest from a cultural perspective has always been archaeology. In fact, in a situation unique to this MRC, specific agreements pertaining to archaeology with the Ministry of Culture and Communications (MCC) have followed consecutively since 2006.

The desire to stimulate participation in artistic and cultural life resulted in the creation of a gallery and exhibition space, the Alfred-Langevin Cultural Hall.

Work is currently being done to stimulate tourism, which will no doubt influence cultural life.



4. POINTS TO CONSIDER

The considerations outlined in section 2 and the general profile presented in section 3 make it possible to identify a number of elements that constitute the cultural foundation of the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent, as well as the issues that play into the dynamics of this sector.

Strengths

Unwavering commitment of elected officials – The MRC, with the support of the 13 municipalities of which it is composed, has been drawing particular attention to the heritage aspects of the region in its development planning since 1987, has been developing its archaeological sector since 1993, and has maintained an active cultural policy since 2001.

Archaeology and built heritage – The low population density, slow pace of development, and homeowners guarantee conservation.

Cultural landscape steeped in history – The landscape is likely the second most important territorial resource after agriculture. It represents the physical manifestation of the MRC's history.

Cohesion within the artistic milieu – The quality of life attracts artists, and sharing the same resources necessitates their coming together.

Strong presence of amateurs – Is it the absence of large urban centres, the inspiration artists find in their surroundings, or tradition? Whatever the reason, the popularity of the practice of art in all its forms is very apparent during public artistic events, festivals, collective exhibitions, and contests. In this respect, it is also important to note the availability of a diversity of private courses and training opportunities in the region.

Community spirit – As a sparsely populated region where the majority of the population is long-established with deep ties to the area, the absence of large centres and the Anglo-Saxon tradition favour resourcefulness and community spirit. There are numerous not-for-profit organisations and social economy enterprises, which represent potential partners for the cultural sector.



Biculturalism +1 – The coexistence of Francophone and Anglophone communities is a fundamental feature of the region. The two linguistic communities have differing perspectives. The Anglophones tend to value private and community-based approaches, as well as volunteer involvement. This approach creates links, a sense of belonging and cohesion. It provides flexibility in management and requires few public resources. Francophones tend to institutionalize their operating structures, which is an approach that provides stability, sustainability and access to targeted expertise and support programs.

By way of osmosis and through emulation, the two cultures have influenced and enriched one another.

It is worthwhile noting that the historical Native presence, which imparted remnants of its traditions to the local culture, is relatively absent today due to tighter border controls. The Mohawk community of Akwesasne and the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent have now partnered for several cultural development agreements, creating new ties between the communities.

Rurality – The defining characteristic of the region, where the concept itself summarizes all of its strengths.



Weaknesses

Large territory with low population density - The population density of the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent is almost half that of comparable neighbouring MRCs. Due to its vast area, access to services in general and cultural activities in particular can involve traveling long distances. Transport is a recurring issue that is problematic across all sectors.

Socio-economic indices lower than provincial averages – Socio-economic indices show weaknesses, as do socio-demographic indices. Without going into detail, the unemployment rate is higher in the Haut-Saint-Laurent than for the Montérégie and the province as a whole. The same situation exists for rates of low income. Disposable income per capita is also lower than regional and provincial averages.



Weak resources – The demographic and economic reality of the region lead one to conclude that the available human and financial resources in the cultural sector are limited. While the maintenance of a cultural policy allows the MRC to access a certain expertise and funds through various partnerships, this must be considered in proportion with the MRCs capacity to invest.

Seven out of thirteen municipalities do not invest in culture apart from their share paid to the MRC (Appendix 1).

Exodus of young graduates – Not only is the proportion of the population in the 0-24 age group lower in the MRC than in the Montérégie and across the province, it is also in decline. Post-secondary youth find significantly more opportunities for employment outside the MRC.

Biculturalism – While this coexistence works well on a daily basis, the same cannot be said at the institutional level. The different perspectives, as described above, have some disadvantages, and bringing these together to create a common vision of cultural development represents a challenge.

Access to government services, in the cultural sector, is difficult for Anglophones. Language can present a substantial obstacle and can lead to their staying away. The institutional approach, it is important to admit, produces bureaucracy. The community-based approach, while resource-efficient, must contend with limited resources and scope. Above all, the approach is deprived of a stable and sustainable structure as it depends on the volunteer commitment of individuals. The widespread use of both languages also poses a challenge to the MRC. Indeed, everything that is made public must be translated. Translation also represents a challenge for English-speaking organisations which, in the absence of bilingual communications, are unable to communicate effectively with a significant proportion of the population.

In short, despite the goodwill of all involved, barriers to communication and dialogue remain.

Rurality – The defining characteristic of the region, where the concept itself summarizes all of its weaknesses.

Partners

Partners		Contributions	Shortcomings
Regional	CRÉ VHSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ten years of invaluable resources • Consultation, networking, outreach, financial assistance • Significant agreements with other partners • Objective and equitable distribution of government support for regional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abolished in 2014 • The cultural community of the MRC must in part reconsider its action plan and funding strategies • Shelving of development projects (regional cultural tourism, regional archive centre)
	CLD HSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main areas of activity: economy and business • Management of several financial support funds • Cultural organizations have benefitted in the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources are underutilized in the cultural sector due to a lack of organisations and development projects • Insufficient capacity to organise regional cultural tourism
	School boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two secondary schools serve two linguistic communities • Privileged access to youth and educational resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-sustaining entities with their own cultural policies • Direct collaboration with professional artists and cultural organisations • Involvement on the part of the MRC is rare and depends on random links with teachers

Partners

Partners		Contributions	Shortcomings
Government	MCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major support for the cultural development of the MRC Research and development of the archaeological sector for over 20 years Ongoing heritage agreement Advantageous agreements for the MRC between the MCC and other partners Collaboration with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne as part of an agreement between the MCC and the SAA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press releases and documents exclusively in French
	CALQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awarding of bursaries and grants for artistic creation and training for artists The Placements Culture Patronage Program significantly boosts the results of fundraising campaigns held by organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relates solely to professionals and has little impact in the region Active at the regional level of the Montérégie where the MRC is marginal The MRC is more consistent with that of an intermediate or remote region than peripheral region The MRC obtained only 7% of grants awarded between 2010 and 2015 within the framework of development agreements for the arts and humanities in the Haut-Saint-Laurent Valley Few translated press releases and documents
	Canadian Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several programs supporting cultural and community life The Chateauguay Valley Historical Society and the Branches and Roots Music Festival benefit from this Grants are available to professional artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to programs is difficult for our loosely structured and low-income organisations Strict frame of reference and administrative requirements Long planning process Professional community poorly represented in the MRC

Partners

Partners		Contributions	Shortcomings
Associate	CMCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance, training, information, promotion and representation for members • Preferred contact for the CALQ in the Montérégie • The MRC is a member along with certain actors within the region's cultural sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases and documents exclusively in French
	Culture pour tous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promotion for the Culture Days activities in the MRC since 2002 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs and events are better suited to dense populations and to a well-structured cultural sector • Lukewarm success locally • MRC withdrew its support in 2016 despite efforts invested over more than ten years • Press releases and documents exclusively in French
Corporate	Associations and businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case by case • Local sponsors are able to contribute to activities or projects within the MRC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few potential sponsors who are over-solicited



Challenges

The ideal conditions for maintaining the momentum in cultural development produced over 30 years of effort and 15 years with the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent's cultural policy can be divided into four challenges. They are:

Support:

- Support from elected officials for the local development of the arts, culture and communications sector;
- Financial support from various sources (partnerships, financial assistance programs, etc.);
- Support for cultural organisations;
- Support for professional practice, including upcoming artists



Preservation:

- Preservation of built, landscape, archaeological and intangible heritage;
- Preservation of quality of life;
- Preservation of archives;
- Preservation of existing cultural infrastructure (Alfred-Langevin Hall, Grove Hall, municipal community centres, the Tsionhiakwatha / Droulers site)
- Preservation of existing recurrent activities that have proved successful;
- Preservation of efforts to maintain stakeholder engagement and public interest in cultural activities.

Participation:

- Participation and public access to quality cultural activities;
- Participation of actors within the cultural sector (artists, organizations, establishments, libraries);
- Participation by municipalities;
- Participation in joint initiatives to better promote dialogue and synergies between the different actors in the field, as well as with the local governments;
- Participation by the education community;
- Participation by the cultural community in the sustainable development and vitality of the region.
- Participation by the business community in cultural projects.

Visibility:

- Visibility for the MRC to attract visitors and new residents;
- Visibility for actors within the cultural sector (artists, organizations, establishments, libraries);
- Visibility for cultural activities;
- Visibility for regional identity.



5. SECTOR PROFILES

(In order of priority following the results of a survey questionnaire [Appendix 1])

History and heritage

The cultural identity of a region is composed of a multitude of emotional landmarks related to local and regional history. Knowing the history is the first step towards a better understanding of the region and is the best way to develop a sense of pride and regional identity. This sentiment represents the foundation upon which decisions and informed choices affecting future generations must be made. The cultural heritage of the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent is the result of more than two hundred years of cultural encounters and exchanges between Native Americans, Scots, Irish, French Canadians and Americans. Whether it is due to its landscapes, its architecture, or for its ethnological or archaeological heritage, the MRC has a unique diversity of assets that distinguishes it from other regions of Québec. Low population density, the slow pace of development, and homeowners have helped to guarantee conservation. The landscape is likely the second most important territorial resource after agriculture. It represents the physical manifestation of the MRC's history.

The MRC is very involved in the development and the dissemination of its history and heritage. Sites of interest from a heritage perspective are recognized in the development plan. In partnership with the MCC, the MRC has supported research into, and the development of, its archaeological potential for more than 25 years. This work resulted in the creation of the Drouler's site, which is recognized by both levels of government, while also allowing for the discovery of 13 other sites as well. It has also resulted in the publication of monographs and newsletters.

The MRC produced a guide to promote the religious heritage of the region in 1996, following a study commissioned by the MCC on non-Catholic religious denominations. An article published in the magazine *Continuité* during the spring of 2000 brought several facets of its heritage to light at the provincial level.

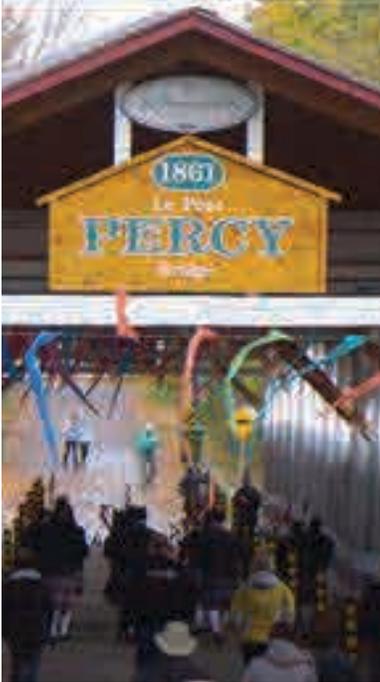


Photo: Peter Cyril Dahms



Photo: Save the Laguerre Ruins (Facebook page)



Photo: Peter Cyril Dahms

More recently, major public events have been held to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Powerscourt covered bridge, The Gleaner (a weekly newspaper) and the bicentenary of the Battle of the Châteauguay. Historical re-enactments at the sites and thematic exhibitions at the Alfred-Langevin Hall were part of the programming. The activities surrounding the commemoration of the Battle, which stemmed from a collaboration between the MRC, the Châteauguay Valley Historical Society, Parks Canada and Canadian Heritage, had by far the greatest impact.

In 2013, the urban planner for the MRC and the cultural development officer prepared a call for tenders to create a profile of the cultural heritage landscape. The MRC did not receive the necessary funding to follow through on the project, however the documents remain accessible for any future occasion.

In the same year, the MRC supported the creation of an historical audio guide for the Town of Huntingdon. The project stemmed from a joint initiative between a teacher at Arthur-Pigeon High School and a multimedia artist from the region.

In 2015 and 2016, the owner of the site of the United Church of the former village of Godmanchester was able to stabilize and preserve the ruins after receiving a grant from the Local Development Centre of the Haut-Saint-Laurent (CLD HSL) and technical assistance from the MRC.

A documentary film, which focused primarily on the region's built heritage, was produced in 2004. A short film highlighting the region's cultural heritage in general is currently in production.

Recently, at the request of the owners, the municipality of Très-Saint-Sacrement began the process to grant the Morrison House an official status, namely recognition by municipal citation.

An extensive project is currently underway: the creation of the Haut-Saint-Laurent museum and historical centre, which will include an archives centre. The project is being supported by the Châteauguay Valley Historical Society, with technical assistance from the MRC. A grant from the CLD HSL allowed for the feasibility study for this project to be completed.



Resources

As we have seen, the sector is quite rich and significant resources exist. These consist mainly of sites of interest and past or contemporary events. Publishing a list here would be too long and out of place. In summary, the territory of the MRC includes 32 places of worship, 12 sites with official status (Appendix 3) and at least 15 sites, buildings or events that merit special attention. Not to mention the many historical houses. The two historical societies in the region are valuable resources and are probably the most structured cultural organisations apart from libraries. The Saint-Anicet Historical Society (SHSA), founded in 1983, and the Chateauguay Valley Historical Society (CVHS), founded in 1968, are devoted to the documentation, conservation and dissemination of local history at the regional level.

Aboriginal heritage, while historically linked with our own, is emphasized by the Mohawk community of Akwesasne. Although it is culturally different from that of the Iroquoians who formally inhabited the MRC, this community collaborates with our archaeological research. The Mohawk community's events, sites of interest and organizations, which include the annual Pow-Wow, the Akwesasne Museum, the Thompson Island Cultural Camp, and the Native North American Travelling College, all serve to enrich our knowledge of the past. The Cultural Heritage Act accords municipalities with the power to recognize and protect their cultural assets. An active cultural policy allows the MRC to enter into agreements with the MCC.

These agreements are essential to the financing of large-scale projects, such as archaeological research, the publication of documents, or the production of films. One such triennial agreement is already underway. Another, involving the MRC as a partner, is currently being negotiated with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) and includes a significant educational component and the transmission of intangible cultural heritage.



Observations

Despite our wealth in assets, potential for development and the combined efforts of stakeholders, there exists several shortcomings with regard to the means of preserving and enhancing our heritage as well as in disseminating our history. The region does not have a documentation centre or a space devoted to the dissemination and interpretation of history and heritage, much less space for an archive. This explains the significance of the project to create a Haut-Saint-Laurent Valley museum and historical centre.

Currently, there are no studies or documents that could serve as the foundation for a process to recognize and showcase our landscapes. As the threat of industrialization, though limited, is still present. We should be concerned for the preservation of certain buildings or historic sites. Important architectural and symbolic structures are deteriorating due to lack of awareness and investment. In general, there are no incentives or regulations established by municipalities to educate the public on the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage. The municipalities hold certain powers, but many lack the resources to use them. Residential buildings are less at risk than one might imagine as, even if they are rarely renovated according to heritage standards, they are at least maintained. The conservation of religious heritage poses a much more acute challenge. Renovations, such as those completed in Saint-Anicet and Sainte-Barbe are good examples, but they impose heavy burdens on the community. The more modest churches of Protestant denominations seem to be easier to maintain so long as there are enough members to keep them active and well-preserved. Agricultural structures are in fact the most threatened. The few examples of heritage farm buildings that remain intact have long become obsolete, have little or no functional value and escape attention.

Particular attention should also be paid to the conservation of regional historical archives. Whether public or private, archives are precious documents of inestimable value which constitute a vast pool of raw material for future historians. At present, each organisation manages with bare resources, which afford temporary and risky solutions at best.

Despite the work of a small number of specialists, certain aspects of our heritage remain poorly documented. This is especially the case for intangible cultural heritage, which includes legends and stories, as well as local and traditional knowledge. This part of our heritage is all the more precious as, in order for it to remain alive, it must be transmitted by those who possess this knowledge. For example, stonemasonry, which is very characteristic of our region, is practiced today by a single family of craftsmen.





Guidelines for an action plan

- Maintain the human resources, collaboration, and organisational and financial partnerships that allowed for the creation of the first cultural policy.
- Maintain ongoing research and development in archeology. Maintain the cultural development agreements with the MCC.
- Successfully complete the proposed agreement with the MCC and the MCA.
- Ensure the strategic monitoring of information relevant to the sector.
- Identify and document places of aesthetic and historical interest, architectural centres and hamlets.
- Promote the creation of a documentation centre or space devoted to the dissemination and interpretation of history and heritage.
- Promote the creation of an archives centre.
- Ensure the strategic monitoring of threats to our built heritage and landscapes.
- Ensure the strategic monitoring of financing for a characterization study of cultural and heritage landscapes.
- Encourage the emergence of landscape awareness within the local population.
- Present municipal councils with the tools and regulations at their disposal to preserve the cultural heritage within their municipalities.
- Identify the properties to be protected according to priority within their territory with municipal councils.
- Occasionally present thematic exhibitions featuring our local history and heritage at the Alfred-Langevin Hall.
- Support organisations in their applications to municipal councils. Provide technical assistance to organisations looking for financing.



Performing Arts

A live show is the very place where cultural mediation takes place. The public is invited to share in a piece of work that exists exclusively within this moment of exchange. It is a magical and ephemeral experience. However, it takes an incredible amount of work just to arrive at this moment.

The artists and organizations within the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent who are involved within this sector enrich the cultural life of the region and contribute to an improved quality of life for the population as a whole. They all enjoy a high degree of recognition locally. Theatre, dance and music are practiced mainly in groups, where each individual contributes to the overall result. This approach promotes interaction and dialogue, which results in the sharing of ideas, experiences and emulation.

The MRC's involvement with this sector began with the implementation of the first cultural policy and has led to collaborations with the performing arts community, the promotion of artists, organisations and events, and the periodic production of intimate performances at the Alfred-Langevin Hall. Since 2013, a partnership with the performing arts centre known as Grove Hall has enabled the MRC to produce larger-scale performances and participate in regional events. The MRC supports the annual Branches and Roots Folk Music Festival, where the main stage is located in Ormstown.



Resources

Along with the Alfred-Langevin Hall, the MRC promotes its artists and organisations on its website, through social networks and in the regional media.

The MRC is an effective intermediary in helping professional artists and organisations to access both financial and technical assistance programs offered by its governmental and associate partners (Section 4, Partners).

The MRC also offers technical assistance in the form of various services to organisations and groups that make a request.

The MRC is home to many amateur artists, musicians, storytellers, actors, four theatre groups, renowned pipe and folk bands, and at least two choirs. There are also a number of professional artists whose career extends beyond the region but who continue to call the MRC home, and they are always happy to perform for a local audience.

As far as local venues are concerned, there are one or two cultural cafés, two high school auditoriums, and one performing arts centre – Grove Hall. Many municipalities have a cultural or recreation centre, or a community hall. These represent versatile spaces where performances can be staged. The best examples are in Sainte-Barbe and Saint-Anicet. The renowned Albert-Dumouchel Hall in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, which is located in the neighbouring MRC, is used by two local professional organisations; the Neva Shelton School of Dance and the theatre troupe Les Caméléons du Haut-Saint-Laurent.

The Branches and Roots Folk Music Festival has taken place annually since 2003. Its mission is to promote popular folk music within the region by attracting high calibre artists while also highlighting the wealth of local talent that exists.

In the area of education and recreational cultural activities, several artists offer private lessons that are open to the public, including the artistic director for the Théâtre de la rivière noire. Chateauguay Valley Regional High School (CVR) runs a successful Performing Arts Department. Grove Hall offers a summer arts camp, and the Neva Shelton School of Dance is, as the name suggests, focused on teaching the art of dance.



Observations

Two elements are essential to the development of the performing arts: the public and resources. The demographic, geographical and social realities of the region are holding back the Haut-Saint-Laurent. Professional calibre productions require substantial human and financial resources. None of the venues in the region are recognized as being eligible for government support. Modern means of communications accentuate the fragmentation of supply and draws local audiences to the nearest urban centres. These considerations apply at the professional level, where the actions of the MRC have little influence. Where the MRC is able to have an impact is at the amateur level, where talent and local implication flourish. The region is home to numerous passionate artists, craftsmen, groups and organisations who are active on the local scene, mainly in the areas of popular music, choral music and theatre. Their work is appreciated during local events. Their role in the community and the personal connections of each member serve to encourage a high level of public participation. A factor in the success of this form of practice is maintaining the delicate balance between visibility and overexposure.

A number of professional artists live in the region however they do not rely on local resources as they are operating at another level. And yet, out of a sense of belonging, they perform in the MRC when the circumstances are right. The MRC is the best-placed organisation for ensuring these circumstances come about, and it often produces two quality performances each year. They are always a success.

The most suitable venues are the two high school auditoriums. CVR is very well equipped, however responding to the public's general interest needs is not their primary concern. As such, it is often difficult to use these venues for events outside the school environment, although the Caméléons du Haut-Saint-Laurent perform at CVR on an annual basis as the auditorium better suits their needs than Grove Hall. A professional production house and performing arts centre, Grove Hall is emerging as a venue but at the cost of hard work by its promoters.

Performance arts education in the region is partly founded on private courses offered by a few artists. As for institutes, there is the Neva Shelton School of Dance and the CVR Performing Arts Department, which have launched several professional careers. In other schools, the performing arts are relegated to extracurricular activities.

The MRC is limited in its ability to offer promotion to local artists and organisations. It is confined to upcoming events, such as a concert, and to a repertory that is no longer up to date.



Guidelines for an action plan

- Maintain the human resources, collaboration, and organisational and financial partnerships that allowed for the publication of the first cultural policy.
- Maintain the programming for the Alfred-Langevin Hall.
- Maintain the partnership with Grove Hall and continue to support its efforts to become a recognized performing arts centre and venue.
- Maintain the support for the Branches and Roots Folk Music Festival.
- Work closely with those tasked with updating the MRC's new promotional tools (website, social networks, newsletter).
- Update the cultural repertory in a more complete, contemporary and interactive format.
- Ensure the strategic monitoring of relevant information.
- Periodically present an artist, group or organisation to the media.
- Structure and publicize the availability of training and cultural recreational activities.
- Maintain affordable pricing for MRC performances to encourage public access.



Visual arts and artisan crafts

The practice of visual arts and artisan crafts is as present here as in any other region. The consultation by questionnaire focused on around fifty artists and artisans. Practice at the amateur level is the most widespread, however the region does include several professionals, and talent is expressed at all levels of expertise. A number of amateurs could qualify as professionals, and many of those who are already working at the highest level deserve much broader recognition. The style of visual art is often figurative or abstract, academic or modern, but rarely contemporary. The traditional aspects of the region are perhaps reflected in the type of art most often practiced. Artisanal crafts are also created in a traditional style, except in the fields of glassware and jewelry.

The consultation by questionnaire revealed that artists and artisans largely participate in the MRC's activities. Those who do not, suggest a lack of information or personal reasons for not participating. (Appendix 1).

The younger generation is present in the local visual arts and artisanal crafts sector, but proportionally well below what the demographic figures suggest could be possible.

The vast majority of artists and artisans who responded to the questionnaire were between the ages of 45 and 64 (Appendix 1).



Resources

The Alfred-Langevin Hall was created in 2001 to compensate for the lack of a regional gallery and exhibition space. Run by the MRC, it now features an annual program of exhibitions highlighting the work of local artists and artisans.

Other exhibition spaces are rare, and the promotion of the visual arts is not their principal function. These include libraries, community centres and other public places, such as cafés, that host occasional cultural activities.

As photography is a popular medium, the MRC organizes an annual contest and exhibition that is open to all residents.

A photography club is active in the region to encourage this practice.

Several artists and artisans offer classes to the public.

Community organisations offer creative recreational activities to seniors.

The Cercle des Fermières is the only local organisation dedicated to the sustainability of traditional handicrafts.

The few professional artists living in the region provide a valuable resource if ever a need arises for their expertise within the framework of a community activity.

In addition to the Alfred-Langevin Hall, the MRC promotes its artists and artisans on its website, through social networks and in the regional media.

The MRC is an effective intermediary in helping professional artists to access both financial and technical assistance programs offered by its governmental and associate partners (Section 4, Partners).

Both the *TRACE* and the *Vocation en Art* programs encourage the emergence of young artists.



Observations

The visual arts and artisanal crafts community shares the same resources, but it is not very structured. There is no visual arts association or organisation in the region. Artists and artisans sometimes turn to organisations outside the region for support and visibility. Conversely, artists from outside the MRC sometimes make use of our resources.

Professional artists rarely make use of the resources within the region, as they are at another level. This is especially true of artists working in contemporary art.

The MRC is limited in its ability to offer promotion to local artists and organisations. It is confined to current events, such as an exhibition, and to a repertory that is no longer up to date.

Young artists make their presence known by participating in the *TRACE* or *Vocation en Art* programs as well as the MRC's collective exhibitions. Unfortunately, outside of these, the opportunities for young artists are not well structured. We know that arts and cultural education are not prioritized in school curricula. Outside of school, and closed off from the arts community, young artists are left to their own devices. For the most motivated, a visual arts program is available through the Collège de Valleyfield.

Certain public places, such as municipal halls, town halls, service centres and the MRC offices, could encourage recognition for our artists and artisans as these potential exhibition spaces are underutilized.

Guidelines for an action plan

- Maintain the human resources, collaboration, and organisational and financial partnerships that allowed for the publication of the first cultural policy.
- Work closely with those tasked with updating the MRC's new promotional tools (website, social networks, newsletter).
- Update the cultural repertory in a more complete, contemporary and interactive format.
- Ensure the strategic monitoring of relevant information.
- Provide technical assistance to professionals looking to access financing.
- Periodically introduce an artist to the media.
- Explore the possibility of using public places as exhibition spaces (ex: an art lending policy at the MRC).
- Participate in the creation of a major recurring public event (ex: festival, symposium).
- Explore the possibility with municipalities of mitigating the tax burden on artists' workshops listed as commercial spaces.
- Structure and publicize the availability of training and cultural recreational activities.





Language, literature and communications

This sector includes those who create content as well as the means of distribution: writers, journalists, correspondents, organisations from a variety of fields, and, literally, all those who publish on social networks. The MRC's cultural policy should not be expected to influence individual practices. The MRC strives, as it does for all other sectors, to help content creators through available means. At the same time, the MRC is more able to effectively support organisations, specifically libraries, but also any cultural organisation that organises conferences, book fairs, or any other activity related to the written word.

The questionnaire survey placed this sector in fourth place out of six in order of priority (Appendix 1). That being said, if the survey had been weighted by number of respondents rather than by target group, the sector would have figured in third position, which is an accurate reflection of its significance. It is a hybrid and essential sector within culture, as it concerns content, but also the practical aspect of how content is disseminated, published, and brought to the public's attention. It is therefore a transversal sector, which overlaps with all others, as information is critically linked with the different spheres of culture and conditions all activity within them. Without information, the key players would not be able to access resources. Without information, it would be impossible to participate as there would be no public, no dialogue, no collaboration or development.

Promotion, visibility and access are common concerns voiced by the three target groups who participated in the survey (Appendix 2). These are all issues that relate to communications.



Resources

The region is covered by a bilingual weekly newspaper: *Le Suroît Régional/The Southwest News*, which includes *Le Suroît Agricole* as a supplement. The region is also covered by two French-language newspapers, *Le Journal d'Affaires du Sud-Ouest* and the *Journal Saint-François*, which includes an English insert, *The Gleaner*. Only *The Gleaner* focuses exclusively on the territory of the MRC. The others cover the Montérégie West more broadly. All of the newspapers are published in paper and digital format.

Two other information vehicles exist online: INFOsuroit and C'est Ma Ville/It's My Town. The latter, a bilingual resource, does not benefit from a dedicated editor but publishes content of local interest from a variety of sources. The MRC makes use of the majority of these media outlets to circulate its culture-related news.

The MRC and municipality websites, as well as municipal bulletins, are valuable sources of information.

In 2015, the MRC established a publishing platform in the Volunteer Correspondents for the Haut-Saint-Laurent. This network of volunteers is open to all, and the journalists/correspondents benefit from professional mentoring and a translation service. General interest articles or opinions on subjects pertaining to the region are published in *Le Suroît Régional* and *C'est Ma Ville/It's My Town*.

Five municipalities in the MRC have a municipal library, namely Saint-Anicet, Sainte-Barbe, Ormstown, Saint-Chrysostome and Huntingdon. The first three are all affiliated with the Montérégie Biblio Network.

The Musée de Société des Deux-Rives de Valleyfield organises an annual book fair during which authors from the MRC are able to participate



Observations

The language, literature and communications sector is cross sectional, and as such, bilingualism must be addressed in this section. The vast majority of survey respondents reported living in a bicultural community (Appendix 1). What is more representative of culture than language? And what is more present in our community than its bilingual nature? This subject is rarely addressed as the presence of both languages is a natural part of our daily lives. Within the context of the MRC's cultural services however, it is quite significant. We represent two communities with different cultures and languages. The publication of press releases and documents in both languages, and the additional effort made to respond in the language of each partner, is common practice. Could we be doing more? Two facts can be used to guide this reflection. First, access to provincial government support programs is more difficult for Anglophone artists, organisations and stakeholders, which can lead to disinterest and non-participation. As a result, they deprive themselves of resources. Second, in a region where participation is already low, it is less than ideal to be dividing audiences. Organisations that neglect to translate their press releases and publications are keeping themselves from a potential audience. The MRC's cultural development officer acts as a liaison in this context. Incidentally, the community services sector faces a similar problem. Cultural organizations highlighted how difficult it was to obtain helpful information beyond the cultural domain on subjects such as volunteerism, charitable organisations, potential corporate partners, the social economy, etc. Closer collaboration between the community organiser for the Montérégie West Integrated Health and Social Services Centre (CISSMO) and the cultural development officer would be beneficial.

In an effort to realize one of the recommendations from the first cultural policy, which called for the periodic circulation of cultural information by way of a single publication, the MRC created a cultural calendar open to all that was hosted on its website. While effective for a time, the tool quickly became obsolete. Sources quickly multiplied and a non-user-friendly interface gradually alienated its users. The communications sector is undergoing profound and rapid change. Today, it is essential that we account for the exponential growth in the availability of platforms and make sure we benefit from them.

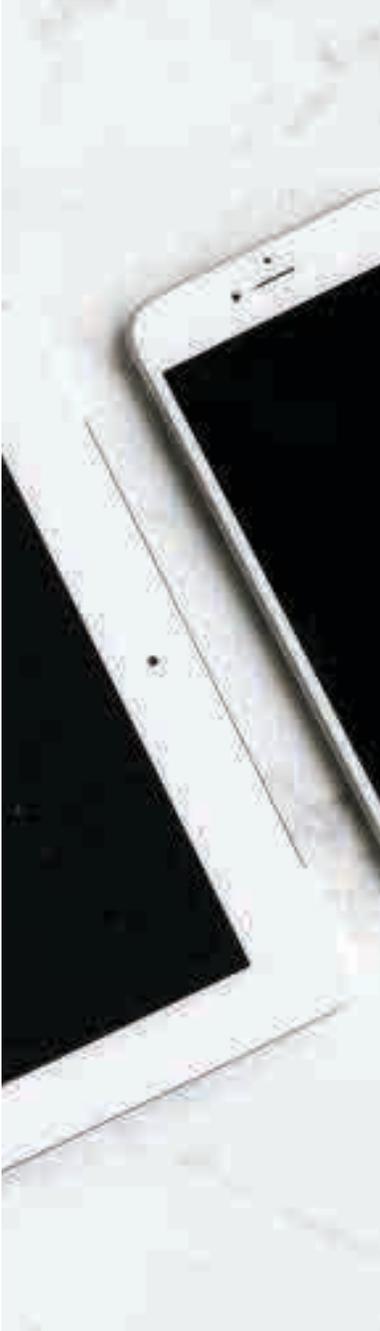
Condensing all cultural content such that it can be accessed through a single media by stakeholders and the public is now impossible. News circulates too fast, and sources are too numerous. Another observation: traditional paper formats have been replaced by digital platforms. The local newspaper, The Gleaner/La Source, the oldest regional newspaper in Quebec, saw the removal of its local office and team following an imposed merger with a Francophone regional newspaper. As a result, it has lost much of its local identity. The MRC is taking this reality into account. It has a full-time communications officer, who is in the process of updating its communications tools. Active on social media networks, the communications officer also supplies the digital newspapers that cover the region with content.





In the same vein as media, libraries are also central to this sector. Concern was raised not only during the construction of the first cultural policy, but also for the present. In addition, the three member libraries with the Montérégie Biblio Network, Sainte-Barbe, Saint-Anicet and Ormstown, recently were forced to refuse services to residents of neighbouring municipalities which had refused to pay their share to join the network. The tightening of rules around access to libraries has led to discussions in less populated municipalities, where municipal councils are reluctant to impose additional costs on taxpayers to subsidize a very small minority of would-be users. Libraries can be considered as information centres and important cultural spaces. However, it is important to recognize that as the maintenance of this service represents a large expense in highly populated municipalities, it is simply unaffordable for those with few residents. At the same time, the Bibliothèque et archives nationales du Québec (BANQ) offers e-books online to all borrowers. The Little Green Library in Huntingdon (LGL), a private not-for-profit organisation, is very dynamic and strives to keep its services up-to-date. It is accessible to all MRC residents, but primarily serves the municipalities of Huntingdon, Dundee, Elgin, Godmanchester, Hinchinbrooke, and Franklin, which all have service agreements with the library. One quarter (25%) of its members are from other municipalities of the MRC (Sainte-Barbe, Saint-Anicet, and Ormstown) and Salaberry-de-Valleyfield. These members are particularly attracted by the library's English collection. A 2015 grant from the CLD HSL enabled it to implement a program focused on digital tools, digital literacy and education. While accessible to the entire population, the LGL does not serve the entire MRC, and its sustainability depends on support from Huntingdon and the implication of an older generation of volunteers. It is apparent that services exist, but they are unevenly spread throughout the region.

Endowing the MRC with its own network of libraries, a recommendation that was generated as part of the first cultural policy, which was brought up again in the survey for the present policy, is not feasible. If the situation facing libraries has evolved over the past 15 years, it has been without the influence of the MRC. The era of town libraries is over. Attempting to keep pace with the characteristics of the library of the 21st century, or to even tend toward the ideal defined by the community of a 'third home', would require resources beyond our collective reach. Could more municipalities in the MRC join the Biblio Network? Combined, these elements create a problem that is difficult to solve. The MRC is well placed to become more involved, but in what way?



Guidelines for an action plan

- Maintain the human resources, collaboration, and organisational and financial partnerships that allowed for the publication of the first cultural policy.
- Work closely with those tasked with updating the MRC's new promotional tools (website, social networks, newsletter).
- Leverage the growing number of digital platforms by targeting content and audiences.
- Update the cultural repertory in a more complete, contemporary and interactive format.
- Ensure the strategic monitoring of relevant information.
- Initiate and coordinate a dialogue between representatives of the Biblio Network and the municipalities.
- Raise awareness of the importance of quality translation among stakeholders in both languages.
- Establish a more functional collaboration with the community organizer for the CISSMO.



Training, education, and cultural recreational activities

Our first cultural educational experiences take place in the home and at school, however, continuous learning and creating throughout our lifetime is not only a desire but a need given the complexity of the world we live in. The MRC faces many social and geographic obstacles, but it possesses resources and, above all, it brings together youth oriented communities interested in developing its full potential.

Resources

The two secondary schools in the region, Arthur-Pigeon and CVR, promote the awakening and development of creative talents.

The five libraries in the region offer educational activities for young people. Adults as well, considering the support program for the use of computers offered by the LGL. They also host exhibitions and conferences.

The MRC participates in two regional programs designed to encourage emerging artists and to support their careers. These programs include the *Vocation en art*, which is run through the Huntingdon Carrefour Jeunesse-Emploi, and *Traquer la relève artistique et culturelle en émergence (TRACE)*, which is supported by four regional exhibition spaces of which the Alfred-Langevin Hall is one.

The MRC is among the partners who organise the *Rural Youth Recognition Gala*, an annual event celebrating the volunteer involvement of local youth in their community. Cultural acts are included as one of five categories open for nominations.

The Neva Shelton School of Dance, a renowned private institution, teaches the art of dance.

As previously mentioned in the descriptions of other sectors, several artists from a variety of disciplines offer courses and tutoring.

Creative hobbies and recreational activities are included in the programming for the Huntingdon Maison des Jeunes, as well as several community organisations.

Observations

Schools are the main access points for young people, however they rely mainly on internal resources. A successful dialogue with the MRC to develop collaborative projects or activities with the MRC often depends on the involvement of a single teacher within an institution. This link is fragile, and these steps are often repeated. Participation in programs such as the *Rural Youth Recognition Gala*, which brings together several community organisations and school board representatives, helps to build stronger relationships.

Cultural recreational activities and artistic training opportunities exist, but they are not structured. This shortcoming surfaced during the consultation by questionnaire (Appendix 2).

Guidelines for an action plan

- Structure and publicize the availability of cultural recreational activities and training opportunities.
- Maintain participation in the *TRACE* program.
- Maintain participation in the *Vocation en art* program.
- Maintain partnership with the *Rural Youth Recognition Gala*.





Media Arts

Unless representatives of this sector have escaped our attention, they are not numerous in the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent. This sector includes a few artists, professionals and website designers.

Resources

- A multimedia and film production company, Le Matou Noir.
- Mr. Bernard Leduc, a soundstage technician.
- The recording studio and company, Piglet Records, owned by Christopher Pennington.
- Two film clubs, one sponsored by the municipality of Saint-Anicet and the other by the LGL.

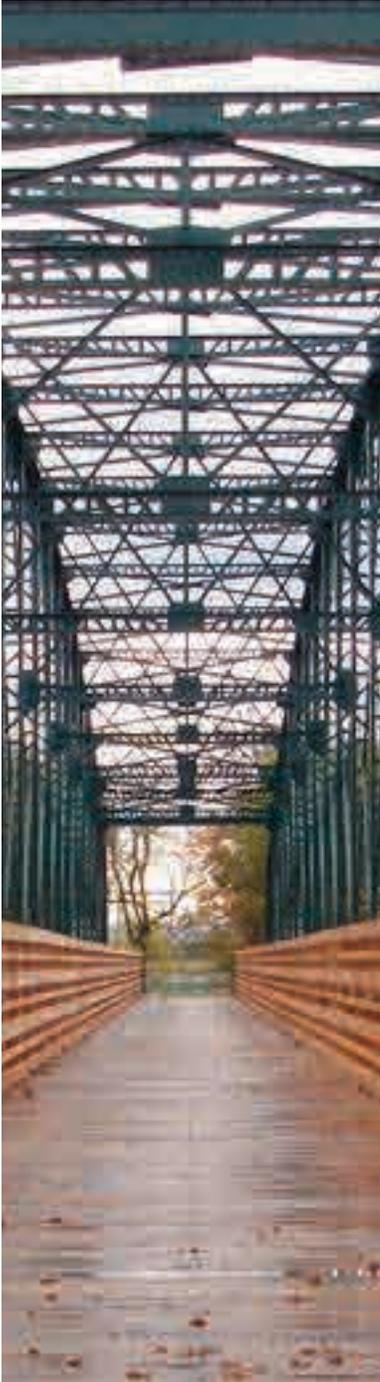
Observations

The MRC makes use of these resources according to its specific needs.

In the medium term, there is very little to suggest this sector will evolve within the region.

Guidelines for an action plan

- Maintain occasional collaborations.
- Participate in the promotion of the film clubs.
- Participate in the promotion of businesses in this sector.
- Update the cultural repertory in a more complete, contemporary and interactive format.
- Ensure the strategic monitoring of relevant information.
- Periodically present an artist or professional in the media.



6. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

Within the geographical and social context of the MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent, given the low population density, the numerous obligations facing the municipalities that make up the MRC are already proving to be a challenge. Despite the good will and interest demonstrated by elected officials, the cultural sector is simply not a priority for the majority. Nine out of the thirteen do not allocate any human resources with regard to culture within their administrations. The others entrust the cultural and recreational activities with their elected representatives and rely as much as possible on volunteers.

In addition to their share with the MRC, eight municipalities allocate less than \$10,000 annually to culture and recreation. The other five spend between \$40,000 and \$100,000. It is important to note here that these five municipalities support libraries that absorb the bulk of these resources.

According to the survey, between 51.7% and 80% of respondents, depending on target group, felt that cultural development fell within the jurisdiction of the MRC (Appendix 1). The MRC has noted this result and has affirmed its role as an agent and leader of cultural development.

The MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent works directly with citizens (residents or artists), not-for-profit organisations, professional or not, and the municipalities within its territory within the framework of cultural activities or projects. The MRC recognizes these individuals and organisations as experts in their fields and assumes a supporting role, offering technical support, consultation and coordination. The MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent, given the lack of resources, has broad support within the community to act as a promoter or producer of cultural activities or projects with a regional appeal.

The MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent represents the interests of the municipalities within its territory as well as its governmental and associate partners in the field of culture.



The financial aspect

The MRC has no cultural fund and little flexibility within annual budgets adopted each fall for the following year. All expenses tied to recurring events are anticipated, and the more significant activities such as archaeological research and publication, projects to showcase heritage, or support for artists, are funded through partnership agreements with government agencies (MCC, CALQ, ...) where all activities are planned in the medium term (2, 3, 4 years). This leaves no room for spontaneous requests from local organisations, regardless of the significant value carried by these organisations and their projects.

For financial support, professional artists and cultural organisations may apply to the MCC, the CALQ and Canadian Heritage.

For technical support and training, they are able to become members of the Conseil Montérégien de la culture et des communications (CMCC).

Municipal organisations, the Akwesasne Band Council, cooperatives and not-for-profit organisations can use the Territorial Development Fund (FDT) to help finance cultural projects.

7. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND CREDITS

The MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent expresses its gratitude toward the elected representatives of the thirteen local municipalities for their unwavering support of the research and development work invested in its archaeological heritage for more than 25 years and for their desire to maintain a cultural policy since 2001.

The MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent thanks all those involved in the cultural sector in the broadest sense who, on a daily basis and often behind the scenes, work to preserve, enrich and promote our beloved region.

The MRC du Haut-Saint-Laurent thanks the residents, artists, representatives of the municipalities and organisations that participated in the survey used in the writing of the cultural policy.





The MRC also thanks the members of its Cultural Committee, a competent, dedicated and useful group of volunteers who helped to set out a framework for the process between 2012 and 2017.

- Robert Anderson, Representative for the history and heritage sector
- Daniel Beaudin, representative for the history and heritage sector
- Alain Boisvert, representative for the professional/multidisciplinary artists
- Agathe Brisebois, representative for the history and heritage sector
- Alain Castagner, representative for the municipal elected representatives
- Louise Charlebois, representative for the language, literature and communications sector
- Ronald Critchley, representative for the educational community
- H  l  ne D'Amours, representative for professional/multidisciplinary artists
- Andr   de Bellefeuille, representative for the visual arts sector
- Philippe Decloitre, representative for the educational community
- Nathalie Fournier, representative for the language, literature and communications sector
- Nancy Houvert, representative for the visual arts sector
- Marc Lacroix, representative for professional or multidisciplinary artists
- Patrice Laflamme, representative for the language, literature and communications sector
- Gerry Leroux, representative for the history and heritage sector
- Anna Potapova, representative for the business community
- Sarah Rennie, representative for the visual arts sector
- John Ryan, President, and representative for the visual arts sector
- Anne-Marie Samson, representative for the language, literature and communications sector
- Neva Shelton, representative for the performing arts sector
-   ric van Zuiden, representative for the visual arts sector
- Martin Verrier, archivist

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Revision:

Nancy Brunelle, Manager for the Alfred-Langevin Hall

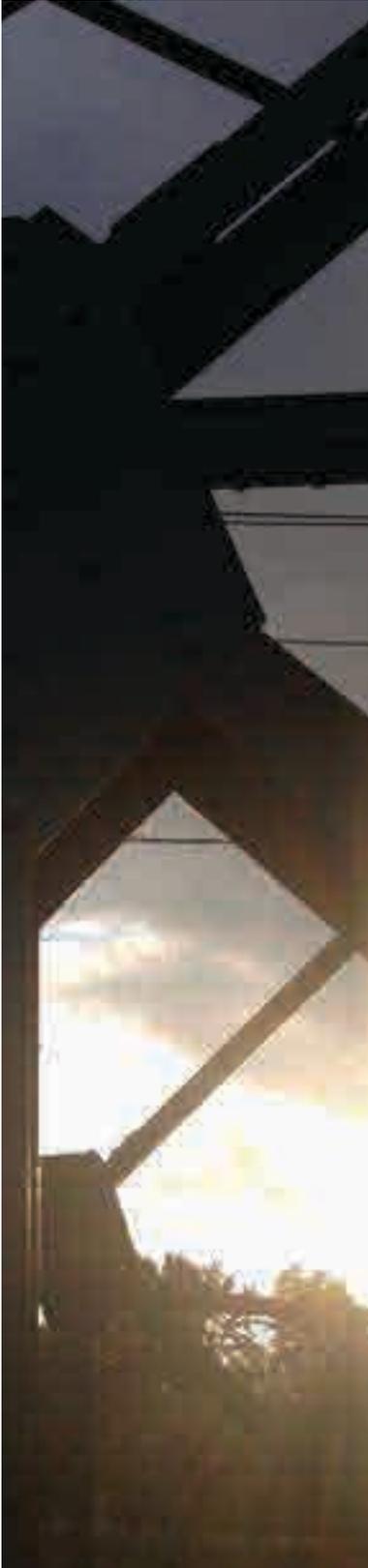
Anick Lacroix, Communication Coordinator

Layout and graphic design:

Anick Lacroix, Communication Coordinator

Translation:

Sarah Rennie



8. GLOSSARY

Agenda 21 for Quebec Culture: Frame of reference unveiled by the Ministry of Culture and Communications in 2011. This document sets out the principles and objectives for making culture an essential component of society, such that it is integrated into the social, economic and environmental dimension of sustainable development. (Agenda21c.gouv.qc.ca)

BAnQ: Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (Quebec National Library and Archives).

CALQ: Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec.

Canadian Heritage: Federal Government of Canada department responsible for policy relating to culture, communications and sport.

CISSMO: Montérégie-West Integrated Health and Social Services Centre.

CLD HSL: The Haut-Saint-Laurent Local Development Centre.

CMCC: The Conseil montréalais de la culture et des communications (Montérégie Council for Culture and Communications).

CRÉ VHSL: Conférence régionale des élus de la Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent (Regional Conference of Elected Representatives for the Haut-Saint-Laurent Valley).

Cultural activity: All productions/performances, mediations, sites, or spaces that relate in any way to culture and are offered to the public.

Cultural heritage Act: An act to regulate the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage, it was adopted by the National Assembly on October 19, 2011.

Cultural policy: A reference document that regulates the public service, in terms of culture, that a local government provides to stakeholders and the general population.

Culture pour tous: A non-profit organisation providing promotion and support for Culture Days, whose core funding stems from the Ministry of Culture and Communications.

Development project: A project that meets the principles of coherence, relevance, consultation and sustainability.



History and Heritage Sector: Within the context of this cultural policy, this sector includes everything relating to the management, protection, conservation, dissemination, promotion and enhancement of the MRC's cultural heritage. Namely, all material or intangible goods and cultural landscapes of artistic or historical significance that shared a collective dimension and are transmitted from generation to generation.

Language, Literature and Communications Sector: Within the context of this cultural policy, this sector includes all activities and resources related to the creation, production, publishing, broadcast, and distribution of printed or digital materials. This sector also includes writers and independent artists, journalists, and content creators who participate in the production of documents, books, and periodicals.

MCA: Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

MCC: Ministry of Culture and Communications

Media Arts Sector: This sector represents those who create and disseminate works of art through the use of technology. For example, the artistic disciplines included in this sector include video art, kinetic art, computer art, digital art, electronic art, interactive art, multimedia art, cyber art, networked art, biotech art, robotic art, sound art, technological art and spatial art. (Canadian Heritage Information Network, CHIN)

Montérégie: One of the 17 administrative regions of Québec, located in the southwest portion of the province.

MRC: Municipal Regional County. A municipal governing body dedicated to consultation and regional planning.

NPO: Not-for-profit organisation.

Performing Arts Sector: In the context of this cultural policy, this sector includes any individual, group or organisation that creates, produces or promotes a piece of work, theatre or opera performance, or music, dance or variety show. This sector also includes any individual, group or organisation providing the artistic, creative or technical skills required for the production of performances, as well as the provision of skills training in the performing arts. (Adapted from: the Observatoire de la culture et des communications du Québec)

Resources: The human, organisational, material or financial resources available to accomplish an objective or action.



TRACE: *Traquer la relève artistique et culturelle en émergence* (tracking emerging young artists in the visual arts). An initiative aimed at supporting the professionalization of young emerging artists in the visual arts. The project is currently supported by four venues: the Alfred-Langevin Hall in Huntingdon, the Musée de société des Deux-Rives in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, the Musée régional de Vaudreuil-Soulanges and the Maison Trestler in Vaudreuil-Dorion.

Training, Education and Cultural Recreational Activities Sector: Within the context of this cultural policy, this sector includes all resources, both institutional and private, which, according to a methodical approach, tend to transmit knowledge or develop skills in the field of culture, arts, history and heritage, literature, science and technology.

Visual Arts and Crafts Sector: Within the context of this cultural policy, this sector includes any individual, group or organization that creates, distributes or exhibits original works of artistic expression, or decorative or utilitarian works of art (painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing, photography, textile arts, installation, performance, art video) or any other form of expression of the same nature, as well as original works from a trade relating to the processing of wood, leather, textiles, metals, silicates, or any other material. (Adapted from: the Observatoire de la culture et des communications du Québec)

Vocation en art: A platform and training opportunity offered to young artists in the visual arts by several regional youth employment centres, including Huntingdon.

Appendix 1: Cultural Policy, 2017 edition
Questionnaire consultation from April 25 to May 16, 2016
Summary of Results

538 citizens/9,693 doors (5.5%) (296 on paper, 189 webfr, 53 webang)

19/69 artists

15/21 organisations

13/13 municipalities

Questions	Citizens		Artists	
Attendance	Never	9.2%	Never	0%
	Rarely	24.3%	Rarely	15.8%
	Occasionally	55.3%	Occasionally	26.3%
	Regularly	14.3%	Regularly	57.9%
Non-attendance	Lack of personal interest	31.1%	Lack of personal interest	0%
	Lack of time	25%	Lack of time	0%
	Distance	5.6%	Distance	0%
	Lack of information	18.3%	Lack of information	33.4%
	Little offered of interest	16.5%	Little offered of interest	0%
	Other	3.2%	Other	66.6%
Sectors attended	Visual arts and trades	24%	Visual arts and trades	100%
	Performing arts	23.3%	Performing arts	50%
	Lang, lit, and comm.	17.8%	Lang, lit, and comm.	26%
	History and heritage	16.5%	History and heritage	26%
	Media arts	8%	Media arts	31.6 %
	Training and activities	10.5%	Training and activities	26%

Questions	Citizens	Artists	Organisations	Municipalities
Sector prioritization	1 History, heritage	1 Visual arts, trades	1 History, heritage	1 History, heritage
	2 Visual arts, trades	2 Performing arts	2 Performing arts	2 Performing arts
	3 Lang. lit. and comm.	3 Lang. lit. and comm.	3 Visual arts, trades	3 Training, activities
	4 Performing arts	4 History, heritage	4 Lang. lit. and comm.	4 Lang. lit. and comm.
	5 Training, activities	5 Training, activities	5 Training, activities	5 Visual arts, trades
	6 Media arts	6 Media arts	6 Media arts	6 Media arts

Cultural development authority	Municipality	23%	Municipality	5.3%	Municipality	7.1%	Municipality	0%
	MRC	51.7%	MRC	73.6%	MRC	57.2%	MRC	80%
	Region ¹	16.9%	Region ¹	5.3%	Region ¹	14.3%	Region ¹	10%
	Other ² :		Other:	15.8%	Other ³ :	21.4%	Other ⁴ : all	10%

¹ Region : Montérégie § ² Other : Not MRC (1); NFPO (2); Other (15); Volunteers (3); Nobody (1) § ³ Other : All/Private § ⁴ Other : All

Questions	Citizens		Artists		Municipalities	
Access to Internet	Yes (paper respondents)	80%	Yes	100%	Unsatisfactory	69.2%
	Yes (online respondents)	100%			Satisfactory	30.8%
	Non (located in rural zone)	80%	Rural zone	84.2%	Very satisfactory	0%
Type of connection	Low speed	4.1%	Low speed	0%		
	Intermediate speed	44.4%	Intermediate speed	55%		
	High speed	51.7%	High speed	45%		
Rate of Internet use	Never	2.7%	Occasionally	5.5%		
	Occasionally	5%	Daily	94.5%		
	Weekly	6.3%				
	Daily	87%				
Internet usage	1 Correspondence 2 Entertainment 3 Information 4 Research 5 Shopping 6 Work		1 Work 2 Information 3 Correspondence 4 Research 5 Shopping 6 Entertainment			
Internet usage and link with the community	Not at all	45.5%	Not at all	22.2%		
	Slightly	31.3%	Slightly	38.9%		
	Greatly	15.1%	Greatly	33.3%		
	Do not know	8.3%	Do not know	5.6%		
Perception of environment	Homogenous	26.4%	Homogenous	0%		
	Bicultural	56.3%	Bicultural	84.2%		
	Multicultural	17%	Multicultural	158%		
Age range	15-24	8.2%	15-24	0%		
	25-44	16.7%	25-44	5.3%		
	45-64	47.2%	45-64	63.1%		
	65 +	33%	65 +	31.6%		

Questions	Organisations	
Sector of activity	Performing arts	57.1%
	Lang. lit. and comm.	21.4%
	History and heritage	14.3%
	Visual arts and trades	7.1%

Questions	Municipalities	
Human resources in culture	Yes	4
	No	9
Investments in culture (outside of MRC share)	\$2,000 and -	7
	\$10,000 and -	1
	\$40,000 and +	1
	\$50,000 and +	2
	\$80,000 and +	2

Appendix 2: Cultural Policy, 2017 edition
Questionnaire consultation from April 25 to May 16, 2016
Summary of results for desired services and contributions

Target group	Desired services	Contributions to practice, career and objectives
Artists	<p><i>In the order of occurrence for the top 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General promotion • Financial assistance for volunteer organisations and cultural productions • Creation of a space for literary exchanges or support for such a space • Social networking for artistic events • Dissemination of works • Reinstatement of JC in the region • Help in locating exhibition venues • Festivals • Support for the creation of cultural organisations and the development of infrastructures • Developing links between schools and locations for artistic training • Community outreach service (radio?) • In the case of a competition, the MRC may donate the prize to an organisation of the artist's choosing. 	<p><i>In the order of occurrence for the top 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General promotion • Increased local visibility and in other MRCs • Promotion of French language literature and theatre • Annual exhibition dedicated to professional or advanced amateur photographers • Inform and mobilize elected representatives and citizens to prioritize this sector as an element of regional development • Support for my practice and its dissemination • Selection of my proposal for the Alfred-Langevin Hall as I have exhibited in Montreal • Maintenance of assets (A-L Hall) • Exchanges with other MRCs in the context of theatre and music • Broad dissemination of the cultural repertory • Direct financial assistance • Technical assistance in the form of workshops to publicize bursary and grant programs and to explain application procedures • Possibility of exhibiting my work

Appendix 2: Cultural Policy, 2017 edition
Questionnaire consultation from April 25 to May 16, 2016
Summary of results for desired services and contributions

Target group	Desired services	Contributions to practice, career and objectives
Organisations	<p><i>In the order of occurrence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More promotional support • Direct financial support for not-for-profits • User-friendly and updated cultural repertory and cultural calendar on website • Proactive involvement of existing service and organisations with new interest groups or organisations (liaison officer, CISSSMO community organization and intervention) • Networking events by sector • Diffusion of human resources in culture to increase public recognition. 	<p><i>Random order</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and mobilize municipal councils around cultural issues • Accompanied access to a pool of volunteers with targeted interests • Support for organisations by municipal councils • Access to regional consultation • Collaborative and shared cultural vision • Access to assistance programs • Access for all to a library/support for literacy and digital literacy by way of an action plan • Production of cultural events in municipal community centres • Equal access to services for Anglophones
Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and promotion of successful local activities for local communities • Promotion of the availability of artistic training and cultural activities for young people • Local library network if possible 	

**Appendix 3: Cultural Policy, 2017 edition
Heritage Assets**

Quebec Cultural Heritage Register	
Huntingdon Registration Office	Huntingdon
Huntingdon County Building	Huntingdon
O'Connor Building	Huntingdon
Powerscourt Covered Bridge	Elgin and Hinchinbrooke
Turcot Bridge	Très-Saint-Sacrement
Droulers-Tsiionhiakwatha Archaeological Site	Saint-Anicet

Federal Heritage Designations		
Battle-of-the-Chateauguay National Historic Site of Canada (NHS)	(Allan's Corners) Très-Saint-Sacrement	1920
The Defense of the Chateauguay Ford National Historic Event of Canada (NHE)	Très-Saint-Sacrement	1920 Plaque 1928/1977
The First Creamery National Historic Event of Canada (NHE) Established in 1873, it was followed by the creation of dairy schools to develop the industry	(Athelstan) Hinchinbrooke	1943
Havelock Township Hall National Historic Site of Canada (NHS)	Havelock	1984
Powerscourt Covered Bridge National Historic Site of Canada (NHS)	(Powerscourt) Elgin and Hinchinbrooke	1984
Customs Immigration Building (FHB)	(Trout River) Godmanchester	1991
Droulers-Tsiionhiakwatha National Historic Site of Canada (NHS)	Saint-Anicet	2007

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