

BAIE SAINTE-MARIE

PUBLIC SPACES PLAN
FINAL

MARCH 2021

UPL▲ND



TABLE OF CONTENTS



1 • INTRODUCTION



2 • BAIE SAINTE-MARIE



2 • L'ANSE-DES-BELLIVEAU



4 • LE FOURNEAU



5 • CAP SAINTE-MARIE



6 • LA PLAGE MAVILLETTE



7 • LAC WENTWORTH



8 • IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION



CONTEXT

The Baie Sainte-Marie region is located along Nova Scotia’s Yarmouth and Acadian Shores in the Municipality of Clare. The region covers an area of approximately 1,900 km² and boasts incredible oceanic landscapes with majestic cliffs, ecologically rich habitats, and vibrant Acadian villages and communities.

The Baie Sainte-Marie area is home to one of the largest Acadian populations in Nova Scotia and in North America. Acadians are known for their sincere “joie de vivre”, celebrated by music, festivals, culture and way of life.

The ‘Township’ of Clare was granted to the Acadians in 1768, and the Municipality of Clare was incorporated in 1879. It is the only jurisdiction in the province that operates and offers services in both French and English.

Unique local histories, diverse landscapes and rich cultural experiences attract numerous tourists annually to the Baie Sainte-Marie region. It has several accommodations including inns and B&Bs, cottages and campgrounds as well as a significant inventory of short-term rental accommodations, e.g. Airbnbs.

The region offers authentic dining experiences ranging from local seafood to traditional Acadian cuisine including the iconic dish “Rapure”.

In Pointe-de-l’Église (Church Point), visitors can explore the rich culture and heritage of the Acadians at the Rendez-vous de la Baie interpretive centre on the Université Sainte-Anne campus. The visitors centre is a key gathering spot for residents, students and visitors.

Throughout the region, several examples of historic architecture remain today including the granite Église Saint-Bernard and Église Sainte-Marie, the largest wooden church in North America.

Acadian culture is alive and well in the region today, with countless local artists and artisans and crafters. Several galleries showcase local works ranging from paintings, quilts, rug hooking and woodworking, offering another dimension to the local cultural experience.

HOW TO GET THERE

Located on the southwestern coast of Nova Scotia, the Baie Sainte-Marie area is accessed almost exclusively by car. From Halifax, visitors can travel along Highway 103 along the South Shore, which takes approximately 3.5 hours, or they can travel along Highway 101 through the Annapolis Valley, which takes approximately 3 hours.

The Baie Sainte-Marie area can also be accessed from New Brunswick via the MV Fundy Rose ferry that connects Saint John to Digby, Nova Scotia, which is only 45 km away (40 minutes by car). Similarly, visitors can arrive from Maine via the Cat ferry, which connects Bar Harbor, Maine to Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. Yarmouth is only 45 km from the Baie Sainte-Marie area (30 minutes by car).



ME

NB

NS

**BAIE
SAINTE-MARIE**

St John

Bay of Fundy

Digby

Halifax

Bar Harbour

Yarmouth

Gulf of Maine

BAIE SAINTE-MARIE PUBLIC SPACES

The Baie Sainte-Marie area offers a variety of outdoor activities across the region's expansive natural landscape. From cycling to birdwatching, surfing and kite flying, to paddleboarding and clam digging, the area truly has something for every adventurer. Numerous parks and trails give access to white sand beaches, caves, camping spots with unobscured views of the ocean, and provide unique locations for events and festivals that profit from the region's natural beauty.

The region features a handful of marquee public spaces that are located within 35 km of one another. Visitors have the opportunity to visit a single site or several sites as a day-trip.

Some of the key parks and trails for accessing local cultural and natural amenities include:

- Sentier de Clare Trail (42.4km from Weymouth to Yarmouth County)
- Sentiers Le Petit Bois Trails
- Sentier Piau Trail at Anse-des-Belliveau
- Sentier Cap Sainte-Marie

L'ANSE-DES-BELLIVEAU

l'Anse-des-Belliveau (Belliveau Cove) is located along the northern periphery of the region and consists of two destinations - Parc Joseph et Marie Dugas and Pointe-à-Major.

Parc Joseph et Marie Dugas features a 5 km walking trail, a protected marina and a lighthouse. It also includes a public restroom, gift shop and hosts a farmers market on Saturdays. Pointe-à-Major is located just west of the park and hosts an Acadian cemetery and chapel that commemorates the arrival of a group of Acadians during the 1755 expulsion.

LE FOURNEAU

Parc provincial Le Fourneau (Smuggler's Cove Provincial Park) is a spectacularly rugged cove surrounded by dramatic coastal cliffs. The park offers viewing platforms and a wooden staircase that leads down to the ocean. Interpretive panels explain why the cove was an ideal spot for smugglers during Prohibition.

CAP SAINTE-MARIE

Parc du Phare au Cap Sainte-Marie (Cape Saint Mary Lighthouse Park) offers expansive views over dramatic cliffs and breathtaking sunsets over the Bay and Gulf of Maine. The park features a lighthouse, public restrooms, and a monument commemorating those lost to the sea from the Municipality of Clare.

LA PLAGES MAVILLETTE

Parc provincial de la plage Mavillette (Mavillette Beach Provincial Park) is a 1.5 km long sandy beach backed by fragile marram grass-covered dunes protected by boardwalks. The park facilities include change houses, vault toilets, fresh water taps, interpretive panels, and three parking areas and boardwalks to access the beach.

LAC WENTWORTH

Parc Lac Wentworth (Wentworth Lake Park) is a municipal park established on Lake Wentworth. The park occupies 10 hectares of land located just outside the village of Corberrie along Route 340.



L'ANSE-DES-BELLIVEAU
Belliveau Cove

Little
Brook

Saulnierville

Trunk 1

Highway 101

LE FOURNEAU
Smuggler's Cove

Meteghan

**CAP
SAINTE-MARIE**
Cape Saint Mary

**LA PLAGE
MAVILLETTE**
Mavillette Beach

**LAC
WENTWORTH**
Wentworth Lake

UPLAND

Route 340

ABOUT THE PROJECT

With their celebratory spirit, the Municipality of Clare has been selected to host the Congrès mondial acadien (CMA) in 2024. The lively culture and centre for French language in Nova Scotia make Clare alongside their neighbouring Municipality of Argyle (together, Clargyle), a natural choice to host the Congrès. This international event attracts Acadian peoples from all over the world with 75,000+ anticipated participants. This is the first time in 20 years that Nova Scotia has hosted the CMA.

As Clare prepares to host the CMA in 2024, the Municipality wants to be sure their community has the spaces and amenities necessary to support the influx of visitors and ensure an enjoyable experience. Although Clare hosts many visitors through the summer months every year, notably, the annual Gran Fondo Baie Sainte-Marie that has become the largest cycling event in Atlantic Canada, the Congrès mondial acadien will bring an unprecedented number of people to the community in 2024, and the Municipality recognizes the need for preparation.

Several sites have been identified that need improvements to further enhance a regional tourism strategy through means of wayfinding, site planning and landscape architecture interventions. The identified sites are in need of infrastructural improvements or architectural amenities to ensure a cohesive visitor experience within the region, and are described in the following sections.



L'ANSE-DES-BELLIVEAU



LE FOURNEAU



CAP SAINTE-MARIE



PLAGE DE MAVILLETTE



LAC WENTWORTH

APPROACH

Each of Clare’s public spaces are geographically varied and engaging, they include the traditional fishing village and iconic lighthouse of Cap Sainte-Marie, the expansive sandy shores and sea-bird habitat of Mavillette, and the steep cliffs and sea caves of Le Fourneau. They also offer accessible coastal trails and family-friendly ocean fun at Anse-des-Belliveau and a meaningful historic site at Pointe-à-Major.

Each site has its own unique contexts, histories and conditions that demand specific

analyses and understandings in order to generate a design response. That said, some of the key interventions will involve both practical amenities such as restrooms and parking facilities, as well as interpretive and educational assets such as information kiosks, public art, interpretive exhibits, interactive installations and municipal signage. Improvements and additions to practical amenities will make the public spaces in the Clare region more welcoming and usable for both visitors and local residents, and any new or improved interpretive and educational

assets, designed with longevity in mind, will continue to inform and orient visitors to Clare for years to come.

The approach and objectives are intended to convey the strategic direction, goals, values and focus upon which the master plan recommendation are made. The approach and objectives will be further revised through consultation with the Municipality of Clare and community stakeholders.

Rooted in a rich and living Acadian history within a spectacular coastal landscape, the Baie Sainte-Marie area offers a “joie de vivre” that will be shared with visitors from around the world at the Congrès mondial acadien in 2024. This Public Spaces Plan will ensure that the region can put its best foot forward for this major events, while also improving the quality of life and sustainability for people who actively live and work in the region.

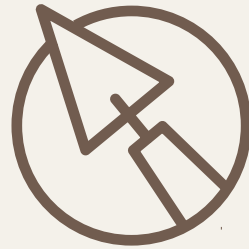
GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Landscape as Identity

The tale of Evangeline, famously written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in the early 1900s, captures the essence of the Acadian region, expressing that the permanence of landscape upholds Acadian identity. Their relationship to landscape was critical to their existence and prolonged resilience.

“Landscape as Identity” is encapsulated in the overall approach to design features of this Plan.



Bricolage

Bricolage is the concept of “using whatever materials and resources come to hand.” This approach has been embraced throughout Acadian existence. Acadian peoples are resilient and inventive, utilizing local materials, tools and diverse skill-sets to build and design their local landscape.

The concept bricolage is applied to this Plan through the selection of aesthetics, building materials, cultural and interpretive elements and other site features.



Living Acadian Stories

Acadian culture is forever present in Clare that is unfolding today and will be tomorrow.

This Plan enables a voice that “today is the heritage of tomorrow”, with emphasis on the journey from historical contexts to today to tell a story for the future and not a static narrative of the past.



A Cohesive Region

The success of the tourism industry in Clare relies on the regional cohesiveness of a visitor experience. The quality of specific cultural and natural heritage sites contribute to the region’s overall identity. Significant areas must be considered for their site specific experience and their contribution to the regional narrative.

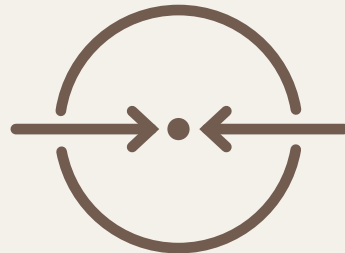
This Plan focuses on the connection of sites through physical infrastructure, wayfinding strategies and integrated interpretation.



Attract & Retain

Enhancements to Clare’s public spaces will improve visitor experience during the Congres, and will also help attract new visitors to the area on a regular basis.

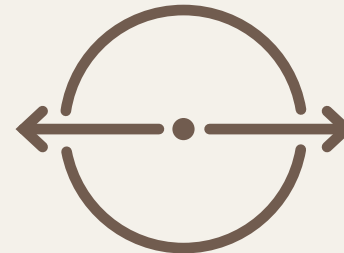
The Plan recommends site improvements and initiatives that encourage prolonged stays and further exploration of the region .



Community Focused

While public space enhancements will certainly be enjoyed by visitors, they will also benefit the hard working and fun loving people of Clare. Public spaces will become both cherished recreational assets and potential business opportunities when the demand for new offerings increases with more visitors.

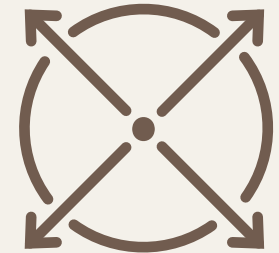
The Plan presents opportunities to improve recreational opportunities for locals, while also creating new tourism-based business opportunities.



Provincially Aligned

The potential of the Baie Sainte-Marie area is greatest within the context of the Yarmouth and Acadian Shores tourism region, including Yarmouth and Argyle, and beyond to reinforce Acadian connections within the Annapolis Valley.

The Plan reinforces this by recommending partnerships and connections that position the region as a key destination.



Expanded Capacity

As the region prepares to host tens of thousands of visitors during the Congres mondial acadien, its public spaces will require increased capacity, both in terms of how many people it can accommodate, but also in terms of how functional the spaces are.

Wherever possible, this Plan provides opportunities to expand capacity and function.