



# Regrouping Project of 8 LSDs, the Village of Le Goulet and the Town of Shippagan

« *BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY OF THE FUTURE* »

## Summary of the *initial evaluation* of the regrouping project

### Word from the Chair

As the person responsible for the « *Building our Community of the Future* » project, I am proud to share with you what has been accomplished to date. The project of regrouping eight LSDs, the Village of Le Goulet, and the Town of Shippagan allowed us to conduct a feasibility study for the creation of a new municipality.

I would personally like to thank the LSDs and the municipalities consulted for their interest in this regrouping project. I would also like to underscore the work of the two committees (working group and expanded) and thank them for their commitment and availability. I would also be remiss not to mention the support provided by our representatives in the Department of Environment and Local Government.

A project of this magnitude is very important in order to ensure our environmental, economic, and community development. It is therefore imperative for us, on behalf of our Acadian communities, to undertake this process. This is a democratic approach so that together we can decide on our future. It will enable us to continue our work and build our community of the future.

*Odette Robichaud*

Chair

Inkerman Centre LSD Advisory Committee

## 1. BACKGROUND

In May 2011, the Local Service District (LSD) of Inkerman Centre sent out an invitation to the representatives of the LSDs of Baie du Petit-Pokemouche, Chiasson-Savoy, Haut-Shippagan, Shippagan Parish (including Pointe-Brulée), and Pointe-Sauvage to discuss a regrouping project. This new approach was well-received by our colleagues. It was agreed to start the process with the representatives of Local Government to elect the respective advisory committees in order to ensure fair and equitable representation.

In September 2011, the Department of Environment and Local Government met with the five separate LSDs. The purpose of the meeting was to try to elect advisory committees in order to ensure good representation. The new advisory committees were therefore elected, with the exception of the LSD of Pointe-Sauvage. That LSD chose to not actively participate in this project. During this same timeframe, the municipalities of Le Goulet and Shippagan were summoned to a meeting to discuss the idea with their neighbouring LSDs. It was important to gauge their interest in supporting such a project. After discussions with their respective municipal councils, both municipalities confirmed their interest in participating in our regrouping project. Other meetings followed to discuss how to go about conducting the initial evaluation of the establishment of a *new municipality*. An expanded committee and a working committee were therefore set up in December 2011. The working committee will spearhead the amalgamation project.

In April 2012, we extended the same invitation to the Advisory Committees of the LSDs of Évangéline, Landry Office, Maltempec, and Pokemouche. The purpose of the meeting was to present them our project. We also wanted to get their feedback with respect to this project, which would lead to a feasibility study. The Advisory Committees of the LSDs of Landry Office and Pokemouche decided to join us. All of the LSDs and municipalities involved gave us a letter indicating that a motion had been voted on either in Committee or in Council. That letter officially attests to their commitment to this project, which will lead to a feasibility study with respect to the establishment of a new municipality. This democratic and inclusive approach will allow us to obtain the information we need, with supporting figures, to determine together whether such a regrouping is achievable. It will also provide us with the essential tools we need, which will be crucial when making such a decision. Later, it will also allow our residents to have their say on the future development of our communities on an environmental, economic, and community level.

On June 28, 2012, during a press briefing, the expanded committee shared with the public the initial work that had been done to date. At that time, it was mentioned that in the fall, the work would continue with public consultations.

**2012 Situation:** At present, with the LSDs and municipalities involved in our regrouping project, we would have a population of 6,365 and a tax base of \$345,298,348. Hence, we would form a new municipality that has more bargaining power with the various levels of government and a much greater financial capacity.

LSDs/Municipalities	2011 Population	Assessment
Baie du Petit-Pokemouche	176	\$4,788,450
Chiasson-Savoy	466	\$16,541,788
Haut-Shippagan	272	\$9,051,250
Inkerman Centre	800	\$27,763,500
Landry Office	398	\$12,598,500
Shippagan Parish (including Pointe-Brûlée)	230	\$9,611,300
Pointe-Sauvage	85	\$1,719,600
Pokemouche	518	\$33,530,300
Le Goulet	817	\$19,547,300
Shippagan	2,603	\$210,146,360
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,365</b>	<b>\$345,298,348\$</b>

**Main Objectives:** Such an regrouping would allow us to ensure the dynamism, health, and sustainability of our community for all of the residents of the new municipality. Combining our community strengths would enable us to:

- establish a more representative structure (right to vote) that is more efficient (local decisions);
- increase our local capacity (tax base, infrastructure, and services); and
- ensure the sustainable development of the entire territory (improved management).

## 2. COMMON CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERESTS

The communities of our eight LSDs and the municipalities of Le Goulet and Shippagan share a number of common characteristics and interests. A good integrated management of three components (environmental, economic, and community) is essential for the future of our beautiful coastal region.

**Environmental:** Our coastal region faces serious environmental challenges that must be addressed through appropriate management (erosion, flooding, and protection of drinking water). We must combine our capabilities. The united LSDs and municipalities will be better equipped to work at protecting our environment. Becoming a single entity will allow us to develop a healthy watershed management system for the Pokemouche River and the water bodies we share. Equipping our territory with a comprehensive plan we can develop our new community in a more orderly manner and better protect the land, water and air of our ecosystem.

**Economic:** The residents of the LSDs, the village, and the town already share a leadership that encourages social and economic development. Volunteering plays a major role and contributed to the vitality of our communities. Our regions currently share services such as police, firefighters, CAPA, COGEDES, public schools, consumer services, and even our highway network. Hence, by regrouping, we can counter constant cost increases and ensure our future development, which is becoming increasingly complex. We will work together to build a stronger and more prosperous community. That could represent better sources of revenue and more investment in existing or new infrastructures. At the same time, we could maintain a lower tax rate, which could attract new businesses. This is a unique opportunity that would allow us to enjoy shared growth as one community, which would ensure job creation and saving our workforce. Improving our quality of life in a rural region could offer us the chance to:

- develop our community;
- improve the delivery of our services;
- preserve a viable and adequate tax rate that is more equitable.
- enjoy a larger tax base;
- offer more power to the residents of the LSDs;

**Community (socio-cultural/sports):** We share numerous services such as the arena, the public library, the golf club, the community college, the public schools, the Research Institute, the pool, the university, etc. Naturally, the regions involved in this project already form a community of interest that offers a wide range of services and contributes to the development of a community spirit. Forging the socio-cultural and sporting links that unite us would increase our collective strength.

### 3. REASONS FOR WANTING TO FORM A NEW MUNICIPALITY

A municipality is the cornerstone of our community and the foundation of our daily life. It's where we live, work, and raise our families. We want to ensure the sustainable development of our communities, i.e., « *to ensure development that meets residents' needs without compromising the future of the generations to come.* » Through their geographical locations, the LSDs and the two municipalities involved in this project have always shared the same history without having a joint mechanism for developing a common dialogue. This would give us a key motivation to build our future together through a single system of local governance. Representation of the LSDs and the municipalities on a single council would allow for:

- intelligent environmental practices that would benefit everyone in order to maintain the diversity of our natural land and aquatic ecosystems;
- better financial management with respect to human resources, finances, and our material resources; and
- a more complete range of public services with regard to employment, education, health care, social services, and accommodation.

The LSDs and the municipalities are faced with numerous challenges (environmental, economic, and community), **but there are solutions!** We must assume leadership in order to move our beautiful community forward. It is very important to focus together on the **formation of a new municipality**:

- that would be more representative;
- that would be more equitable;
- that would thereby result in enhanced cooperation between municipal and provincial leaders; and
- that would apply solutions.

### 4. BENEFITS SOUGHT THROUGH THE FORMATION OF A LARGER MUNICIPALITY

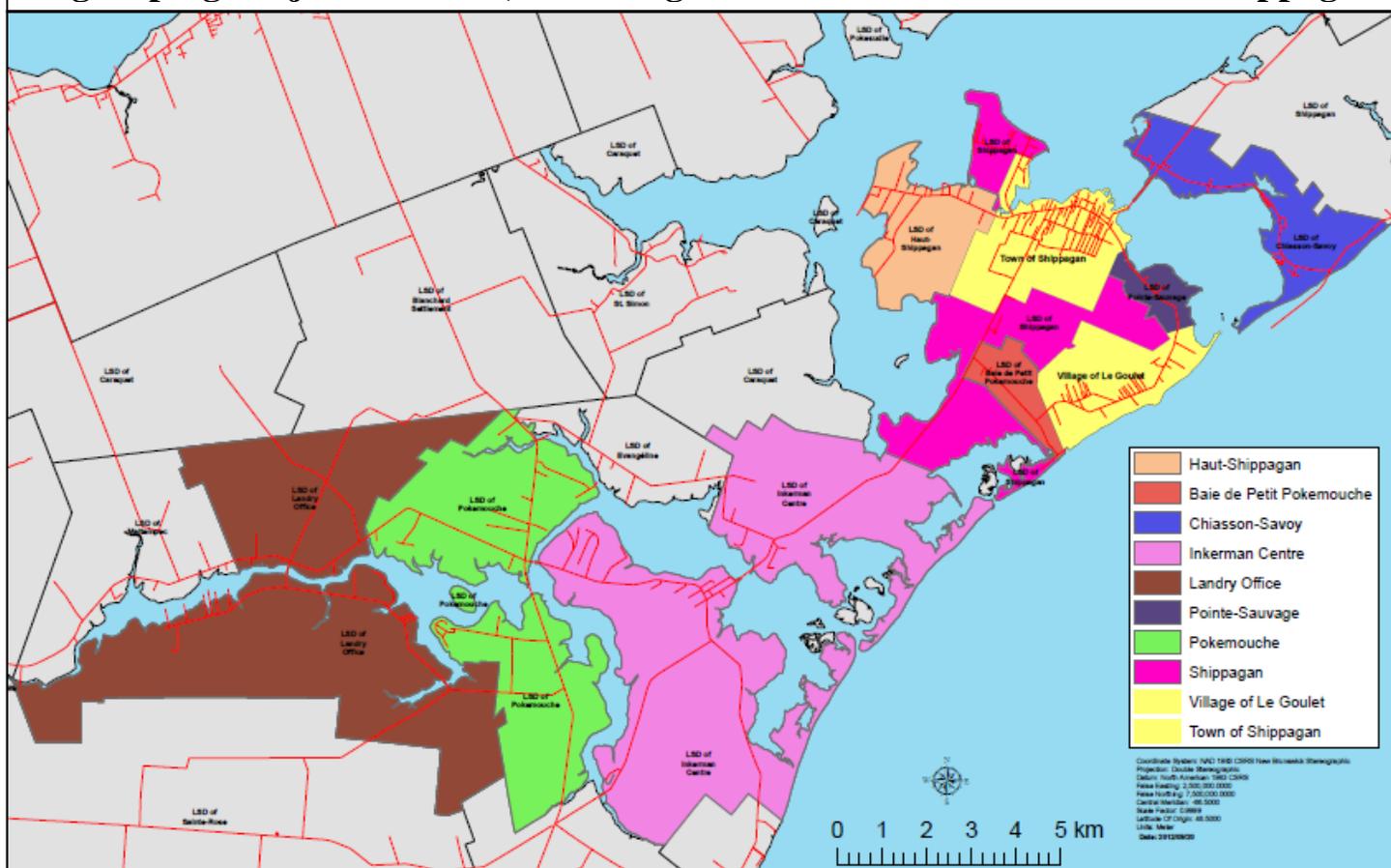
The residents of the LSDs and the municipalities would enjoy a number of benefits that would improve their quality of life, for example:

- Establish better quality public services, which form the base and the foundation of our communities;
- Increase our power and follow in the path of other municipalities in the province that have already begun a regrouping process;
- Allow the residents of the LSDs and the municipalities to work better together in the planning and diversification of environmental, economic, and tourism development strategies;
- Share the current resources, as much as the level of the knowledge, that at the financial, material level, and of infrastructures;
- Properly plan land use to ensure that the various uses are located in suitable locations for the new municipality's desired growth and development;
- Increase accessibility to funding programs (federal and provincial);
- Retain workers and reduce the exodus of young people;
- Maintain a competitive tax rate to offer incentive to businesses wishing to open in our region;
- Increase economic development to focus on small and medium-sized businesses;
- Ensure a planned development of our beautiful coastal areas and of our future community;
- Provide our new municipality with a more solid financial base and capacity allowing it to better respond to our growing needs;
- Establish a standardized green plan for the entire territory;
- Focus more on climate change to reduce adverse effects such as rising sea levels, the quality of our groundwater, and coastal erosion;
- Create green jobs in fields such as energy conservation and urban design that encourages walking and biking. New green jobs are needed in the public sector with respect to the protection and conservation of water sources, the production of small-scale renewable energy, and recycling;
- Enable the new municipality to be consulted prior to any new development. Together, we can better protect public services and local democracy.

### 5. PROPOSED GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES

The communities currently involved in the regrouping project are the LSDs of Baie de Petit-Pokemouche, Chiasson-Savoy, Haut-Shippagan, Inkerman Centre, Landry Office, Shippagan Parish (including Pointe-Brûlée), Pointe-Sauvage, Pokemouche, and the municipalities of Le Goulet and Shippagan.

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### 6. NEXT STEPS

- Sharing the summary of the initial evaluation of the feasibility of the regrouping project;
- Public consultations for the communities involved in the regrouping project;
- Ask for feasibility study to be done;
- Feasibility study in consultation with the residents;
- Preliminary report of the feasibility study;
- Confirmation of the Government's commitments;
- Distribution by mail to each resident of a summary of the preliminary report of the feasibility study;
- Public consultations to present the preliminary report of the feasibility study to the residents involved in the regrouping project;
- Completion of the final report of the feasibility study in the light of the public consultations;
- Distribution of the final report of the feasibility study and presentation to the Minister of Local Government;
- Plebiscite (vote) for the residents of the LDSs and passing of a resolution for each municipality.

### 7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION DATES – From October 1<sup>st</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012

LSDs/ Municipalities	Location	Date	Time
Inkerman Centre	Inkerman Recreation Centre	Monday, October 1	7:00 p.m.
Shippagan Parish (including Pointe-Brûlée)	UMCS* – Gisèle McGraw Auditorium (room 143)	Tuesday, October 2	7:00 p.m.
Shippagan	Shippagan Senior's Club	Wednesday, October 3	7:00 p.m.
Haut-Shippagan	UMCS* – Gisèle McGraw Auditorium (room 143)	Thursday, October 4	7:00 p.m.
Pointe-Sauvage	UMCS* – Gisèle McGraw Auditorium (room 143)	Tuesday, October 9	7:00 p.m.
Le Goulet	Le Goulet Community Centre	Wednesday, October 10	7:00 p.m.
Landry Office	Landry Office Community Centre	Thursday, October 11	7:00 p.m.
Baie du Petit-Pokemouche	UMCS* – Gisèle McGraw Auditorium (room 143)	Tuesday, October 16	7:00 p.m.
Pokemouche	École La Rivière in Pokemouche	Wednesday, October 17	7:00 p.m.
Chiasson-Savoy	UMCS* – Gisèle McGraw Auditorium (room 143)	Thursday, October 18	7:00 p.m.

\*UMCS = University of Moncton, Campus Shippagan.

**THANKS FOR YOUR COOPERATION!**

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