

COLLABORATIVE  
STRATEGIES  
IN COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT

# ACADIE-LOUISIANA WORKSHOP

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- THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010 -  
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA



# ACADIE – LOUISIANA WORKSHOP RESULTS – APRIL 22, 2010 – LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA

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# Background

*There is an affinity between the Acadian and Cajun cultures – even a feeling of being brothers and sisters.*

- Participant

There is often talk of an affinity felt between Acadians, especially those in Nova Scotia, Canada, and Cajuns in Louisiana, United States.

Ideas for exchange projects and cooperation between the two regions are simmering in many formal and informal networks. However, opportunities to meet and discuss how to make these ideas a reality are few and far between.

The Nova Scotia Office of Acadian Affairs joined forces with the Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development and the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDENE) (unofficial translation: Nova Scotia economic development council) to organize a workshop to develop strategies to contribute to the community development of Acadie in Nova Scotia and to strengthen links between Acadie and Louisiana.

## Workshop objectives

- Publicize the *Nova Scotia Community Development Policy* as a best practice in community development.
- Apply the policy's principles to identify opportunities for cooperation and exchange between Nova Scotia and Louisiana.
- Obtain the commitment of key partners and players to implement and coordinate ideas for projects deemed a priority by participants.

This report presents the results of the workshop held on April 22, 2010 in Lafayette, Louisiana. It details the discussions held and lists the project ideas discussed. This workshop was presented as an adjunct to Expo Acadie 2010, an international exhibition organized by CDENE which focused on marketing products and services from Atlantic Canada and Louisiana.

A similar workshop was held in Tusket, Nova Scotia, on February 19, 2010. The report outlining the results of the Tusket workshop has been distributed to participants of both the Tusket and Lafayette workshops, even if they were not able to attend the two meetings.

The workshops in Tusket and Lafayette serve as launching pads for potential exchanges and cooperation between Nova Scotia and Louisiana. The determination of common interests, concerns, issues, and strategies will drive the initiatives for exchanges and cooperation between the two regions. A commitment by participants to implement the projects and initiatives identified is essential.

We now have the opportunity to forge new networks and support existing networks to enrich exchanges and cooperation between Acadians in Nova Scotia and Cajuns.

**Vaughne Madden**

Chief Executive Officer

Nova Scotia Office of Acadian Affairs



# Existing initiatives

## Nova Scotia Office of Acadian Affairs

The mission of the Office of Acadian Affairs is to offer advice and support to departments, agencies, and Crown corporations of the Government of Nova Scotia so they can develop and adapt policies, programs, and services that reflect the needs of the Acadian and francophone community of Nova Scotia.

The objects and purposes of the Office of Acadian Affairs are to:

- a) Ensure that the Government of Nova Scotia is aware of the needs of the Acadian and francophone community;
- b) Offer advice and support to departments, offices, and agencies of Government and to Crown corporations for the purpose of developing and adopting or providing programs, policies, and services that reflect the needs of the Acadian and francophone community;
- c) Serve as a central support agency for other departments for French-language services within the Government;
- d) Develop partnerships with Acadian and francophone agencies at provincial, national, and international levels;
- e) Ensure that Acadian and francophone needs are addressed in the development of programs, policies, and services;
- f) Recognize the contribution of the Acadian and francophone community.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/acadian>

## *Nova Scotia Community Development Policy*

The *Nova Scotia Community Development Policy* is a framework for building stronger, healthier, and more prosperous communities in Nova Scotia. The policy is the result of consultations with many public officials, community organizations, businesses, municipalities, and Nova Scotians. It was approved by the Executive Council of Nova Scotia on 9 December 2004.

The policy serves the following objectives:

- Clarify Government and community roles in community development.
- Increase cooperation, coordination and collaboration among Departments/Offices, between communities and Departments/Offices, among levels of Government, and among communities.

- Increase Government and community capacity to understand and advance community development.
- Develop an accountability framework to report on progress, ensure transparency, and enable evidence-based decision-making in community development.

The *Community Development Policy* is focused on 11 principles:

- Local leadership – support communities that play a leadership role;
- Government support – provide information, expertise, and resources;
- Cooperative approach – enhance coordination and cooperation;
- Balance – integrate social, economic, environmental, and cultural considerations;
- Respect for local values – consider the potential impact on communities;
- Social inclusion – promote opportunities for full participation;
- Transparency and accountability – encourage broad based decision making and measurable results;
- Partnership and shared interests – allow adequate time for relationships to develop;
- Common vision – support communities to share responsibilities in development issues;
- Focus on community assets – build on existing capacity;
- Volunteerism – acknowledge and support the contribution of volunteers.

With a clear understanding of the policy’s principles and how they are interconnected, the principles can be applied to each community development project. The use of the principles helps identify the potential consequences for communities of specific decisions activities as well as the potential for sustainable development.

The full policy is posted on the website of the Nova Scotia Department of Economic and Rural Development at:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/econ/cdpolicy/docs/NovaScotiaCommunityDevelopmentPolicy.pdf>

## Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse

The Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDENE) is a non-profit provincial organization with a mission to improve the economic wellbeing and quality of life of Acadians and francophones in Nova Scotia, Canada, by demonstrating innovative leadership in economic development and employability, supported by linguistic duality.

CDENE strives to provide effective leadership to Nova Scotia's economic community by representing the interests of Acadian and francophone regions and by promoting and enhancing the value of French in the business sector throughout the province.

<http://www.cdene.ns.ca>

### Expo Acadie

In 2004, Expo Acadie was organized for the first time as an adjunct to celebrations of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Acadie. The Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse hosted Expo Acadie 2004, the very first international exhibition in Halifax featuring innovative products and services from Atlantic Canada with an Acadian flavour. This event gathered together delegates from Atlantic Canada, France, Belgium, New England, Quebec, and Louisiana.

Bolstered by its success in 2004, CDENE sponsored Expo Acadie 2006 in Louisiana and Expo Acadie 2008 in Nova Scotia. Expo Acadie 2010 was held in Lafayette, Louisiana, from April 22-24, 2010.

The theme for Expo Acadie 2010 was “Toward a French-language Acadian and Cajun Cultural Economy” and activities centred on the marketing of educational and cultural products and services.

<http://www.expoacadie.com>

## The Great Acadian Awakening

The "Grand Réveil Acadien / Great Acadian Awakening" is a one week gathering of Acadians from around the world that will be held in Louisiana in October 2011.

The mission of the Great Acadian Awakening is to awaken the population of Louisiana and the world, primarily those of Acadian descent, and in particular youth, to the realization that, while positive strides have been made, the people of Louisiana are losing their French language, culture, and coastal land, and to seek support, partnerships, solutions, and concerted plans of action through these large gatherings.

From October 9 to October 16, 2011, the entire Acadiana Region (in Louisiana) will open its doors to welcome family and friends who want to celebrate and assist in helping preserve the Acadian/Cajun culture, customs, traditions, and history of the first North American settlers, the Acadians. The event will focus on showcasing the regional culture and developing closer ties between all Acadians throughout the world by hosting:

- Family gatherings
- Seminars
- Lectures
- Many other cultural activities

<http://www.gra2011.org>

# Participants' expectations

The following comments were noted during the opening session of the workshop in which participants were encouraged to voice their expectations.

- Promote heritage and increase tourism in Acadiana and Nova Scotia.
- Advertise musicians and music events.
- Expand tour operations, options, and packages between Louisiana and Nova Scotia.
- Promote tourism in the African Nova Scotian community and promote the African Nova Scotian culture.
  
- Learn more about community development and build new relationships.
- Develop and expand cultural exchange opportunities and build interest for such exchanges.
- Work on projects which will further bolster community development in Louisiana and in Nova Scotia's Acadian and francophone community.
- Develop partnerships internationally in the community development sector.
- Work on projects which will bring about a better awareness of opportunities and projects in and with Saint-Pierre & Miquelon (France).
  
- Explore potential links and exchanges between the education sector of Nova Scotia and Louisiana.
- Build relationships and collaborate to address issues in the Louisiana teacher certification process to help increase the number of Cajun teachers and home-grown educational material in Louisiana classrooms.
- Increase exchanges between teachers from Canada and Louisiana.
- Create French language programs or classes for students of middle school onward to ensure that French is available to Cajuns of all ages.
- Explore and develop opportunities for Cajuns to attend Université Sainte-Anne (Nova Scotia) during the regular academic year and enrol in classes in the university's regular French-language programs.
- Develop French-language educational programs and develop strategies to: identify local tutors in Acadiana; explore market possibilities; and collaborate with local organizations to promote and deliver these programs in Louisiana.

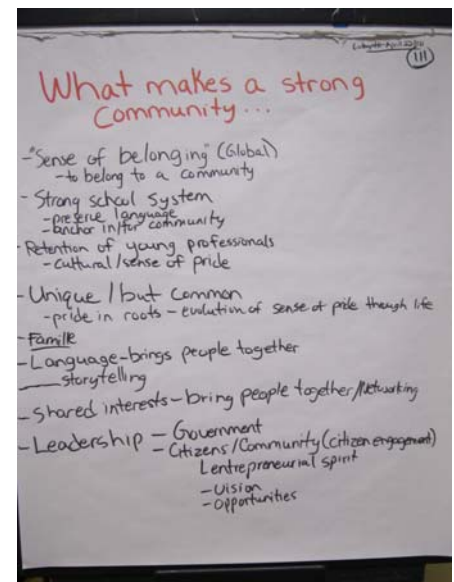


# Characteristics of a good community

*We all belong to a community, whether by choice or by chance.  
Interestingly, we sometimes tend not to notice what we truly like about our communities.*

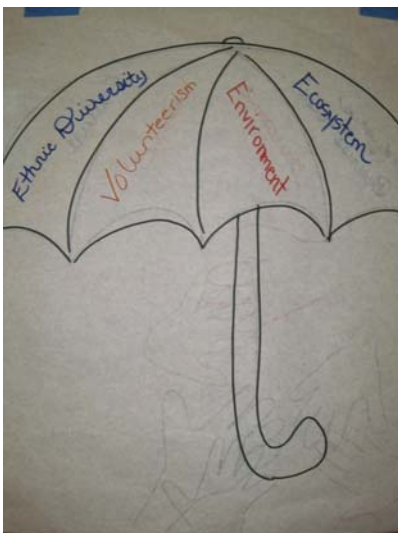
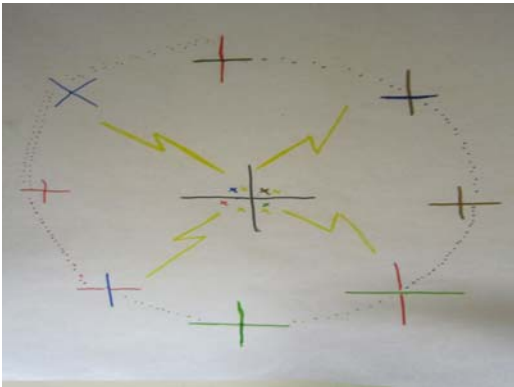
Participants were asked to gather in small groups and list the themes and factors that characterize an ideal community, a good community:

- Sense of belonging
  - o Cultural sense of pride
  - o Attachment to our community
- Pride in our roots/heritage
  - o Common denominator among all of us
  - o Evolution of sense of pride throughout our lives: seems to get stronger as we age; takes time sometimes/for some to develop/fully acknowledge or recognize
- Language
  - o Pride
  - o Preserve
  - o Storytelling
  - o Brings people together
- Strong school system
  - o Preserve the language
  - o Anchor in/for the community
- Retain young professionals in our community
- Family
- Shared interests
  - o Networking
  - o Bringing people together in our communities
- Leadership
  - o Government
    - Entrepreneurial spirit
    - Having a strong vision
    - Recognizing and seizing opportunities for development
      - Ever changing community – identifying goals for a better future and a stronger community



# Images of a strong community

Participants gathered in small groups to illustrate what a strong community means to them.



# Potential initiatives

Participants listed potential initiatives for exchanges and cooperation which they subsequently assembled into seven sectors.

- Sector 1: Folklore and heritage
- Sector 2: Language
- Sector 3: Increased communication and networking
- Sector 4: Youth engagement
- Sector 5: Tourism development
- Sector 6: Exchanges and twinning
- Sector 7: Trade and economic development

The initiatives and activities listed in each sector are summarized as follows.

## Sector 1 – Folklore and heritage

- Folklore and traditions in our communities
  - o Investigating
  - o Documenting
  - o Sharing



## Sector 2 – Language

- French tables
  - o To enable intergenerational exchanges (youth and elders)
- Teach youth to speak Cajun/French
- Teach elders to read (in French)
- Educate youth in our history and culture
  - o School curriculum
  - o Informal /cultural settings
- Increase number of French-language schools and programs in Louisiana
- Chronicle language adaptations and developments
- Develop educational resources

## Sector 3 – Increased communication and networking

- Increase communication through networking between Nova Scotia and Louisiana

#### Sector 4 – Youth engagement

- Engage youth through social medias
- Create an e-forum to share conversations and stories (e.g. Facebook)

#### Sector 5 – Tourism development

- Create themed tours
  - o Two or more locations (e.g. New Brunswick coast and Louisiana coast)

#### Sector 6 – Exchanges and twinning

- Increase the depth of twinning process
- Operationalize
  - o More tangible outcomes of twinning process
- Increase number of opportunities for exchanges between geographic communities

#### Sector 7 – Trade and economic development

- Develop exchange and trade practices
  - o Link similar industries
- Sponsorship consortium
  - o Economy generated by our “common culture”
  - o Create an e-forum for tangible projects

### **Louisiana-Canada Facts**

#### *Trade:*

- U.S. jobs supported by Canada–U.S. trade: more than 7 million (2005)
- Louisiana jobs supported by Canada–U.S. trade: 102,000 (2005)
- Total Canada–U.S. merchandise trade: US\$557 billion (2008)
- Louisiana exports to Canada: US\$2.1 billion (2008)
- Louisiana imports from Canada: US\$1.7 billion (2008)
- Louisiana-Canada bilateral trade: US\$3.8 billion (2008)

#### *Tourism:*

- Canadians made more than 71,300 visits to Louisiana, spending US\$42 million (2008)
- Louisiana residents made 50,600 visits to Canada, spending US\$38 million (2008)

Source: Government of Canada. Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.  
[http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/minneapolis/commerce\\_can/2009/la.aspx?lang=eng](http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/minneapolis/commerce_can/2009/la.aspx?lang=eng)

# Project ideas and implementation plans

## Project idea 1: Cultural and historical preservation

Area of interest	Cultural and historical preservation
Name/ describe project	Documenting and preserving our cultural legacy
Potential partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Universities</li> <li>- Immersion schools</li> <li>- Youth groups</li> <li>- Government</li> <li>- French tables</li> <li>- Media</li> <li>- Arts groups/schools</li> <li>- Organizations (non-profit/community)</li> <li>- Tourism partners</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educate people about our history and culture and why it is important to preserve them.</li> <li>- Educate people about how to document and preserve elements of our culture and history (e.g. videos, writing, photos, interviews with youth and elders, storytelling, etc.).</li> <li>- Develop and host workshops to bring partners together to identify common goals.</li> <li>- Coordinate different organizations to achieve common goals.</li> </ul>
Person(s) responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local TV stations/media</li> <li>- Tourism entities</li> <li>- Arts and humanities organizations</li> </ul>



## Project idea 2: Economy / Trade

Area of interest	Economy / Trade
Name/ describe project	Double your success Trade and heritage exchange  (Concentrate with trade exchanges and link to heritage exchange)
Potential partners	Lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Business/Industry</li> <li>- Government</li> <li>- Organizations (e.g. chambers of commerce, industrial organizations, etc.)</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify like-kind exchanges, products, and services.</li> <li>- Identify trade issues and regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manage and develop solutions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Identify partner businesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify facilitator or point-person in each country.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Complete market, environmental, and feasibility studies.</li> <li>- Develop trade exchange plan.</li> </ul>
Person(s) responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Business leaders –they must own the program</li> <li>- International development specialists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop exchange contract – to facilitate business exchanges</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### **Trade and heritage exchange – Bilingual public service announcement**

Avec notre héritage double, vous pourriez :

- doubler vos occasions et
- doubler vos profits.

Le Programme louisianais d'héritage et d'échange vous ouvrira la porte au succès!

With our double heritage you can:

- double your opportunities
- double your returns

The Louisiana Trade and Heritage Exchange Program offers you the possibility to open your doors to success!

### Project idea 3: Educational exchanges

Area of interest	Educational exchanges between Louisiana and Nova Scotia
Name/ describe project	- Educational class exchanges, either by Skype or one week reciprocal visits - Exchanges between University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Université Sainte-Anne Education students (e.g. for one semester – September to December)
Potential partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Council for the Development of French in Louisiana / Conseil pour le développement du français en Louisiane (CODOFIL) (<a href="http://www.codofil.org">www.codofil.org</a>)</li> <li>- Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) (<a href="http://csap.ednet.ns.ca">http://csap.ednet.ns.ca</a>)</li> <li>- CODOFIL Consortium of Louisiana French Immersion Programs</li> <li>- University of Louisiana at Lafayette (<a href="http://www.louisiana.edu">www.louisiana.edu</a>)</li> <li>- Université Sainte-Anne (<a href="http://www.usainteanne.ca">www.usainteanne.ca</a>)</li> <li>- World Institute Studies of Louisiana (<a href="http://worldstudiesinstitute.org">http://worldstudiesinstitute.org</a>)</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify teachers and schools willing to participate.</li> <li>- Identify key players at both universities.</li> </ul>
Person(s) responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Michel Comeau in Nova Scotia</li> <li>- Elaine Clément in Louisiana</li> <li>- Hughie Batterson for Université Sainte-Anne</li> </ul>



## Project idea 4: Tourism packages - North to South / South to North

Area of interest	North to South/South to North tourism tour packages
Name/ describe project	<p>Package A – South to North (July – August)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community hopping</li> <li>Experience l’Acadie of the North differently in each village</li> </ul> <p>Target markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Families</li> <li>- Students</li> </ul> <p>Package B – North to South (February to April) – 10 week campaign/window/tour window</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Retargeting travel to South – Instead of Mexico or Cuba, market tourism and tour opportunities in Louisiana (e.g. food, music, storytelling, artists/arts, etc.)</li> <li>- February – Mardi Gras</li> <li>- April – Festival International de Louisiane (<a href="http://www.festivalinternational.com">www.festivalinternational.com</a>)</li> </ul> <p>Target markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Families</li> <li>- Students</li> </ul> <p>Package C – Student Exchange Programs (1 semester – Jan to April)</p> <p>Incorporate in high schools as part of history class, for example</p>
Potential partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tourism departments and associations</li> <li>- Municipalities</li> <li>- Tourism/heritage attractions</li> <li>- Université Sainte-Anne (<a href="http://www.usainteanne.ca">www.usainteanne.ca</a>)</li> <li>- Louisiana State University (<a href="http://www.lsu.edu">www.lsu.edu</a>)</li> <li>- Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) – Nova Scotia (<a href="http://csap.ednet.ns.ca">http://csap.ednet.ns.ca</a>)</li> <li>- Nova Scotia Come to Life (<a href="http://www.novascotialife.com">www.novascotialife.com</a>)</li> <li>- Festival International de Louisiane</li> <li>- Mardi Gras associations</li> <li>- Novacadie Tours (<a href="http://www.novacadie.ca">www.novacadie.ca</a>)</li> <li>- Conventions and visitors bureaus (CVBs)</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish partnerships.</li> <li>- Network to create and finalize itineraries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For family market</li> <li>- For student market.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Develop student exchanges programs.</li> <li>- Organize fundraisers for high school exchanges.</li> </ul>
Person(s) responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Novacadie Tours – Richard Laurin</li> <li>- Maison de Begnaud – Mama Redell (<a href="http://www.cityofscott.org/site358.php">www.cityofscott.org/site358.php</a>)</li> <li>- Louisiana State University</li> <li>- Conseil scolaire acadien provincial</li> </ul>

## Project idea 5: Twinning process

Area of interest	Increase depth of twinning process
Name/ describe project	<p>A- Review current twinning situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cities participating</li> <li>- Viability of current twinings.</li> </ul> <p>B- Establish co-leads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDENE) (<a href="http://www.cdene.ns.ca">www.cdene.ns.ca</a>)</li> <li>- Louisiane-Acadie, Inc. – Louisiana and France (<a href="http://www.louisiane-acadie.com">www.louisiane-acadie.com</a>).</li> </ul> <p>C- Develop protocol for twinning process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Initiate and ensure sustainability of twinings.</li> </ul>
Potential partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizations</li> <li>- Museums</li> <li>- Churches</li> <li>- Educational institutions</li> </ul>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connect co-leads.</li> <li>- Research current twinning situation (environmental scan).</li> <li>- Establish a steering committee to develop protocol.</li> <li>- Identify and develop best practices.</li> <li>- Organize conference (in person and virtual).</li> <li>- Identify potential twins.</li> </ul>
Person(s) responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse</li> <li>- Louisiane-Acadie, Inc. – Louisiana and France</li> </ul>



# Observations

Comments gathered from the group discussion at the end of the day

**This workshop was a great opportunity to identify ideas, projects, and actions to further develop them. Let's not lose these ideas and the momentum created. Let's keep moving forward!**

- Something magical happens when people from Nova Scotia and Louisiana get together. It was great to be a part of the interaction between people from both regions.
- I felt that sense of being a family - the chemistry - that exists between Cajuns and Acadians as soon as I walked into the workshop.
- It was wonderful to see the similarities between the projects identified in Tusket (Nova Scotia) and in Lafayette (Louisiana). We need the commitment of individuals and organizations, but also tools to overcome the challenges and ensure the sustainability of relationships and exchanges.
- I appreciated the opportunity to sit and connect with “des Acadiens du Nord”. I am excited to continue to network and work with citizens of both regions (l'Acadie du Nord and l'Acadie du Sud) to develop tourism projects.
- I felt as if I was at a town hall meeting back at home in my Acadian and francophone community. The discussions and issues are so similar.
- We identified projects in various sectors, but it is interesting to see that they are all interconnected. The common thread: our culture.
- I appreciated the opportunity to sit and brainstorm with different people throughout the day. There is nothing like face-to-face meetings/in-person meetings to bring out new ideas and strategies.
- The workshop helped me to outline how I will achieve my own personal and professional objectives.



