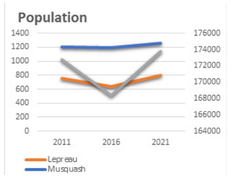
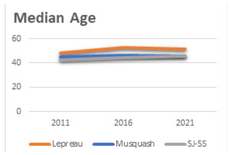
RURAL COMMUNITY OF FUNDY SHORES - RURAL PLAN BACKGROUND STUDY

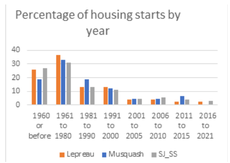
Background Study

1.1 Demographics

Fundy Shores is a new municipality created from the former local service districts of Musquash and Lepreau. Demographic information is not yet available for the aggregated population and therefore census data for the former Lepreau and Musquash LSDs has been used. Data has been compiled from past censuses, conducted by Statistics Canada. As part of the analysis, geographical (Saint John – St. Stephen Economic Area) and historical comparisons help form a comprehensive understanding of the area for the establishment of planning policies. Populations in both former LSDs have shown growth after a period of decline with Lepreau's population growing by 13.6% to 803 and Musquash's growing by 4.9% to 1,253. Ageing is a common concern across Canada but especially in New Brunswick. Median ages in Lepreau and Musquash were 51.2 and 46 – both slight decreases from 2016, but still above the regional median. The newcomer population is noticeably lower than the regional rate of 6.4% with Lepreau at 1.9% and Musquash at 4%.





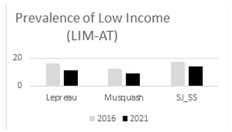


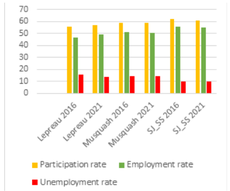
1.2 Housing

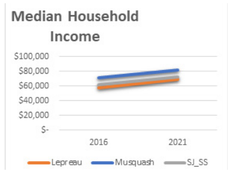
The majority of residents in both former LSDs live in single-unit dwellings – 89.6% in Lepreau and 96.2% in Musquash. While apartments make up a very small number of the remaining dwelling units, there are a significant number of movable dwellings (mini/mobile homes) in Lepreau – 6.5%. Due to limitations on infrastructure, multi-unit, higher-density housing has not been common in rural areas. There is some potential to expand access to a sewage lagoon that exists in a subdivision. There was an extremely small cohort of renters within both former LSDs – 5.2% in Lepreau and 5.7% in Musquash. Mirroring national, provincial, and regional trends, housing starts peaked in the period between 1961-1980 and have declined significantly since. Housing starts across the province have picked up since 2021 and it is likely the case in Fundy Shores as well. While most homes in Musquash are not in need of major repairs (94.3%), that number is significantly lower in Lepreau (87%). significantly lower in Lepreau (87%).

1.3 Income & Employment

Lepreau and Musquash appear quite different when looking at median household income - $69,500 in Lepreau and $82,000 in Musquash. Low income measures are consistent with this – Lepreau at 11.2% of the population and Musquash at 8.8%. While both of these have decreased since 2016, the one-time CERB payments temporarily reduced poverty statistics during the period of the 2021 census. Participation and employment rates have remained relatively steady but are lower than the regional rates. Employment distribution has some similarities between former LSDs (increasingly large populations in health care and social assistance; decreases in construction; manufacturing) but many differences (transportation and warehousing growing in Musquash, shrinking in Lepreau; management of companies only in Musquash; large proportion of primary industries in Lepreau). One difference of particular note is the switch in the proportion of working in utilities – likely at Point Lepreau.







1.3 Economy & Resources

Commercial activity is fairly limited with the majority being related to seafood and is distributed sparsely along major roads and wharves. There are mineral deposits and mineral claims in the northwestern portion of the planning area and along Route 1 that may be explored in the future. Agriculture is fairly limited in much of the planning area with Blueberries as the only commercially-viable crop to be cultivated. There are, however, bands of prime agricultural soil according to the Canada Land Inventory. Areas with prime soil (class 4 and above) should be restricted from residential development unless that pattern is already in existence with roads and other infrastructure. The planning area has an abundance of soils and geology that support forestry and silviculture. Point Lepreau, operated by NB Power is one of four nuclear power plants in the country and is the major employer in the area.

1.4 Land Resources & Transportation Networks

According to assessment data, the vast majority of land area in the planning area is vacant/forested land. There are a few commercial and industrial uses and small institutional uses including a school. Settlement is generally along major roads (Hwys 175, 790, 795, and Maces Bay Rd.) and coastlines with settlement clusters around wharves. Settlement areas include Pocologan, New River Beach, Lepreau, Maces Bay, Dipper Harbour, Chance Harbour, and Musquash. Along the coast, there are certain areas where residential uses predominate and there are other coastal areas where traditional rural land uses and working waterfronts also predominate. Most rural residential developments are located to areas directly adjacent to existing major roads or are taking place within existing settlement nodes. This is positive, as low-density sprawl can create a net negative impact on municipal finances and prevent sustainable municipal services. A uncontrolled and unplanned expansion of settlement areas also increases the human footprint on the environment.



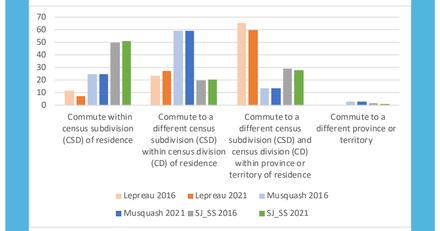










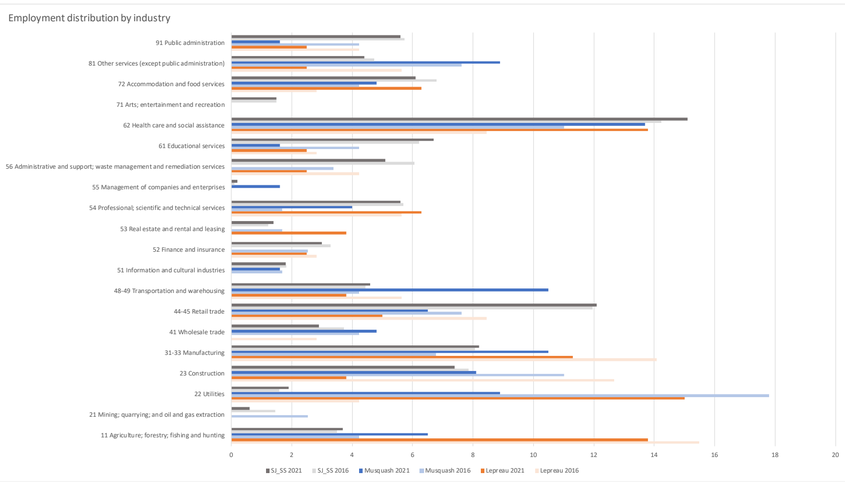


1.5 Environment and Physical Features

As the namesake of the community, the Bay of Fundy is a unifying feature of the municipality's geography and landscape, with most of its development situated near the coastline. Given large coastal portions, sea-level rise is a concern. Eastern Charlotte Waterways, partnering with the Southwest New Brunswick Service Commission, developed a regional climate adaptation plan and has specific sea-level rise projections. Climate change adaptation principles should be incorporated into this rural plan with regard to setbacks and/or adaptive measures.

Fundy Shores is known for its pristine nature. It is home to many wetlands, waterfalls, lakes, beaches, and flora and fauna that live here. Those natural assets provide air and water purification, erosion control, carbon storage and other important ecological services to the region. Many important natural areas are already identified and protected under different means, such as provincial park, protected natural area, and nature preserves. One example is the Loch Alva Wilderness Area located at the northeast corner of Fundy Shores. This is a provincial Class II Protected Natural Area.

Based on desktop analysis, areas with important ecological features and natural heritage have been identified. It is recommended that all or some of those identified areas along with additional areas identified by the community be restricted from intensive development and be preserved for recreational and conservation purposes.



1.6 Historical, Cultural and Social Factors

The oldest settlements in Fundy Shores are from indigenous peoples that date back thousands of years, however precious little of this material history remains and major efforts are being made to secure both known and unknown archaeological and cultural sites. The Peskotomuhkati and the Wolastoqey have claims to unceded traditional territories in the planning area. European settlement started in 1800's based on railway and rural resource development. Like many coastal areas on the Bay of Fundy, a part of the culture of Fundy Shores is influenced by fishing and rural resource industries. While technology and economics of fishing, in particular, has evolved, the importance of working waterfronts and traditional fishing culture is still evident in Fundy Shores. There is also a cultural presence related to the traditional resource-based economy such as forestry, farming, and aggregate developments. There are many residents in Fundy Shores that enjoy participating in outdoor rural activities like hunting, recreational motor sports, and exploring trails. In the planning area, there are many people who commute and do daily business in Saint John but they may choose to live in Fundy Shores for a less-constrained rural lifestyle.

In recent decades, coastal properties in Fundy Shores have been developed as attractive full-time or seasonal residential real-estate by individuals and families looking for beautiful coastal settings; these developments are not necessarily related to traditional resource sectors that revolve around working the land or water. The influx of people choosing to live in Fundy Shores for its quiet and serene coastal environmental qualities has unintentionally led to land use conflicts with and put pressure on critically-important traditional rural resource and fishing related developments. However, increasing the cultural diversity may also be one of the factors helping Fundy Shores sustain a growing variety of businesses and services. Outdoor recreational and tourist attractions in Fundy Shores may benefit from a growing cultural awareness about the importance of preserving and developing Fundy Shores as a beautiful coastal community. The New River Beach Provincial Park and Lepreau Falls, as well as various trails in Musquash Estuary, mean that Fundy Shores are major assets that will continue to propel the idea that Fundy Shores has important natural and aesthetic qualities that should be enhanced.

In terms of recreational assets, other than the trails and Provincial Parks, the outdoor fields and playgrounds of the Fundy Shores School and the Musquash Recreation Center are Fundy Shore's primary recreational assets geared to local residents. While major indoor recreational facilities are available in nearby regions, several of Fundy Shore's Council sub-committees (recreation, community development, tourism, and economic development) have already identified various local assets and potential opportunities to further develop small-scale recreational infrastructure and services that could improve the quality of life for residents. The ideas currently being generated at the committee-level include both private and public-led initiatives that span things from identifying the need for a yoga classes to a new library. Further rural plan public consultation will likely generate even more possibilities.

3.0 INDUSTRY & COMMERCE DIRECTIONS?

3.1 Commercial

The rural plan will need to make provision for commercial services and areas for employment in Fundy Shores. Tourism continues to be an essential source of income for the community, as the area is known for its scenic beauty with the New River Beach Provincial Park. The rural plan can encourage families and individuals to build wealth, and to generate economic development at the local level, by permitting a variety of small-scale businesses, remote work, home industries, and mobile services (eg. food trucks), but also identifying a physical location for a business hub for diverse commercial services.

3.2 Industry & Minerals

The rural plan can also designate appropriate locations for different types of rural industrial development to promote economic vitality while minimizing impacts on the environment, rural landscapes, and settlement areas. As key employment sectors include utilities, agriculture, forestry, fishing, and manufacturing. Industrial zoning will be required. The forestry sector is also significant, with several sawmills and pulp mills operating in the region. The rural plan can encourage sustainable land management practices to protect and enhance the natural resources of the community, including forests, agricultural lands, and fisheries. It can also permit responsible resource extraction activities that minimize environmental impacts and consider the long-term sustainability.

4.0 RURAL SETTLEMENT DIRECTIONS?

4.1 Residential

A rural plan for Fundy Shores will need to encourage appropriate residential development in designated growth areas while preserving the rural landscape and character of the community. It may do this by promoting the development of a range of housing types to accommodate the diverse needs of residents, including both single and multi-unit homes, as well as seasonal dwellings. The rural plan may could support the clustering of rural settlement areas to maximize open space and minimize the loss of agricultural land and natural habitats. The rural plan could have a policy for land development to concentrate residential developments on a smaller portion of a particular portion of land while preserving a significant portion of the land for open space, natural areas, scenic views, woodlands, wetlands, and agricultural lands.

4.2 Affordable Rental Housing

A rural plan for Fundy Shores will need to address housing, including affordable housing and rental housing, and it can propose entering into joint housing projects with non-profit developers to facilitate the development of affordable housing options. The rural plan can have a policy to ensure that seniors and residents of all income levels have access to suitable housing within Fundy Shores. As well, the rural plan can encourage market housing development by identifying opportunities for new developments, especially rental unit development.

5.0 LAND RESOURCES DIRECTIONS?

5.1 Agriculture & Fisheries

The rural plan should protect prime agricultural soils and working fishing harbours that can be permanently lost due to incompatible residential developments. The plan can also promote sustainable agricultural and aquacultural practices that minimize soil erosion, protect water quality, and preserve the rural landscape through environmentally sensitive and appropriate regulations. The rural plan can help foster a variety of local agricultural and seafood production, some of which have substantially evolved in their practices and infrastructure needs in recent decades.

5.2 Forestry

The rural plan for Fundy Shores will need to consider forestry and how it will support the development of diverse forest-based livelihoods and income generation from woodlots. The rural plan can also promote the conservation and sustainable management of forest resources to maintain ecological integrity, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.

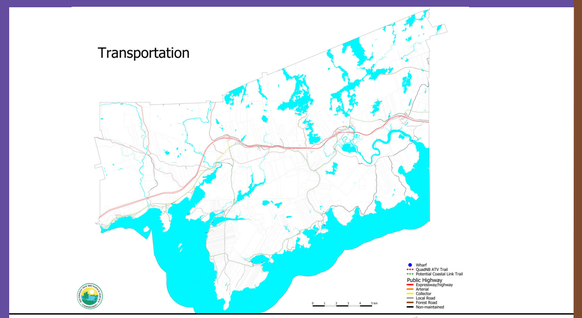
6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL DIRECTIONS?

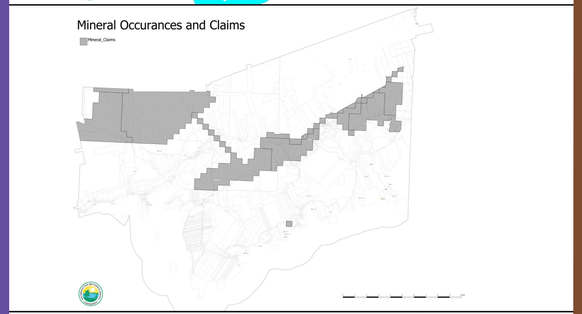
6.1 Climate Change

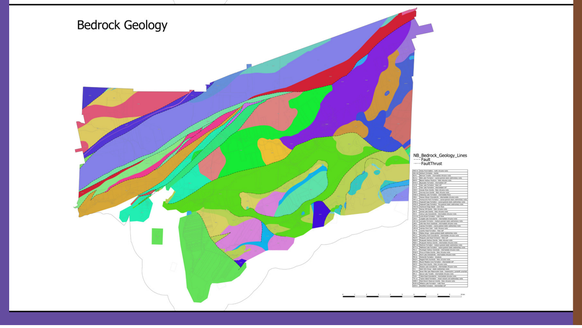
The rural plan will need to consider climate-resilient design principles for new development and for new public infrastructure. The rural plan can establish strategies and policies to adapt to the impacts of climate change, such as sea-level rise, increased storm events, and changing precipitation patterns. The rural plan can promote the use of renewable energy sources in new construction projects. It can also encourage the integration of low-cost green infrastructure, such as green shores, bio swales and permeable surfaces, to sustainably manage coastal erosion or storm water runoff.

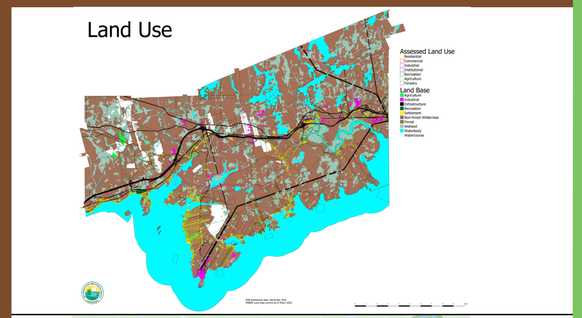
6.2 Protections Around Water

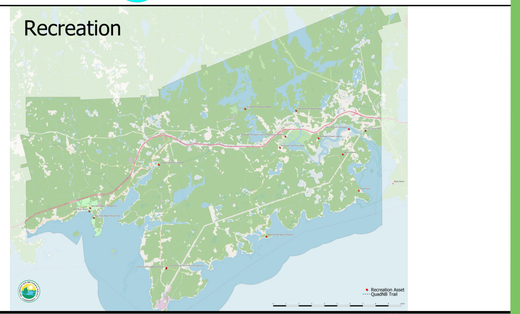
The rural plan should take environmental conservation into consideration and work along with existing conservation efforts to protect and prevent future deterioration of the water supply. Although the Province regulates developments within 30 metres of watercourses and wetlands through the Watercourse and Wetland Alteration Regulation (90-80) - Clean Water Act, municipalities can implement local planning by-laws to protect the environment. Rural plans can help to protect the quality and quantity of water supplies through conservation zoning on watersheds. A rural plan can also implement measures to prevent contamination of water sources from pollution by limiting land-use activities around watercourses and wetlands.

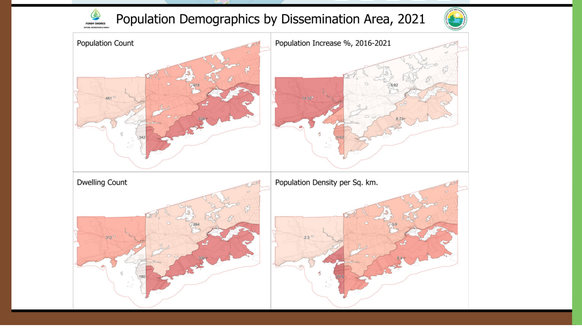


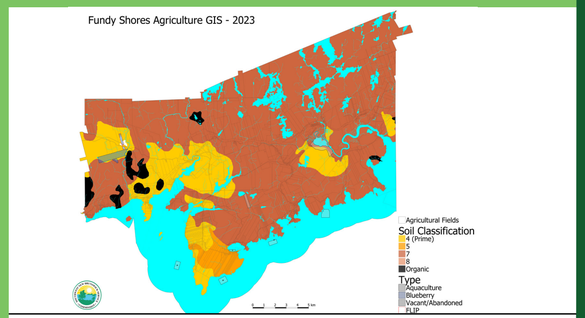


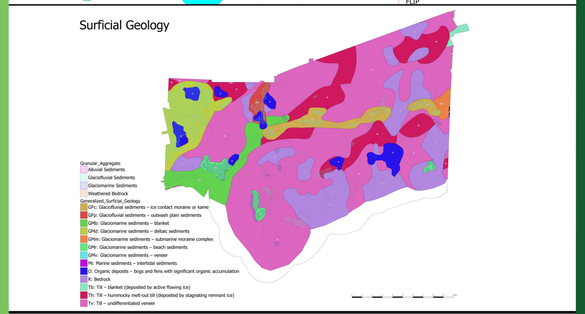


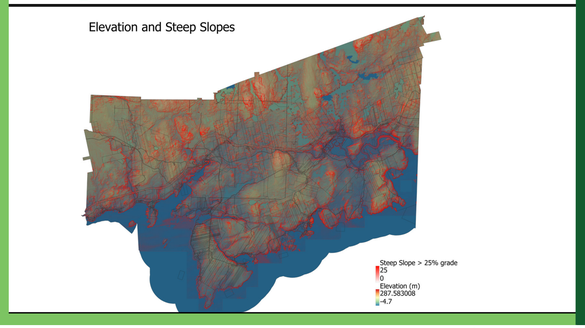


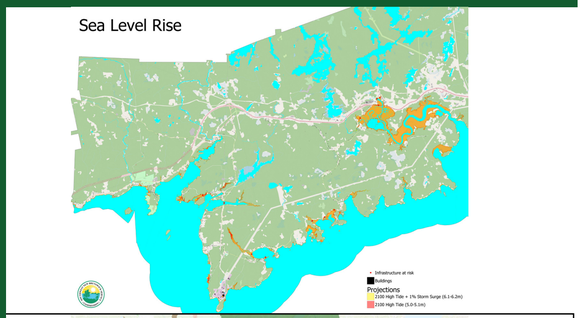


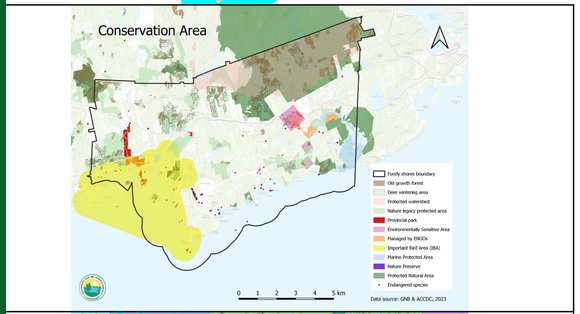


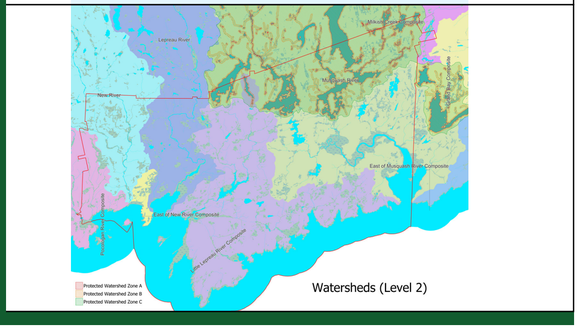












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