

REVIEW OF VAUDREUIL-DORION'S CULTURE 21: ACTIONS SELF-ASSESSMENT

JULY 2017



culture 21

Agenda 21 for culture

In accordance with its participation as a [leading city](#) on Agenda 21 for culture from 2015-2016, in February of 2016 the city of Vaudreuil-Dorion carried out a self-assessment exercise on its cultural and sustainable development policies. This activity was based on the [Culture 21 : Actions](#) document, and was approved by the United Cities and Local Governments Committee on Culture in March of 2015. This allowed cities all over the world to examine their strengths and weaknesses in this area based on a common framework. Furthermore, this exercise made it possible to compare the city's assessment with the results of the Global Panel, obtained by the UCLG Committee on Culture in 2015.

The Vaudreuil-Dorion self-assessment was carried out with representatives from the following organisations:

- City of Vaudreuil-Dorion (elected representatives, the Regional Development and Management Service),
- The regional Vaudreuil-Soulanges Museum,
- The Trois-lacs school board,
- Vaudreuil-Soulanges local development centre,
- Montérégie-West Integrated Social Services and Health Centre,
- Vaudreuil-Soulanges Chamber of Commerce and Industry,
- Viva Media;

The list of participants in the self-assessment exercise is attached to this document.

It was written by Antoine Guibert, expert in the implementation of Agenda 21 for culture, in direct collaboration with the UCLG Committee on Culture. The document summarises and analyses the evaluations, comparing them with aspects taken from the global average as well as suggesting areas that warrant follow-up.

SELF
ASSESSMENT





GENERAL BALANCE

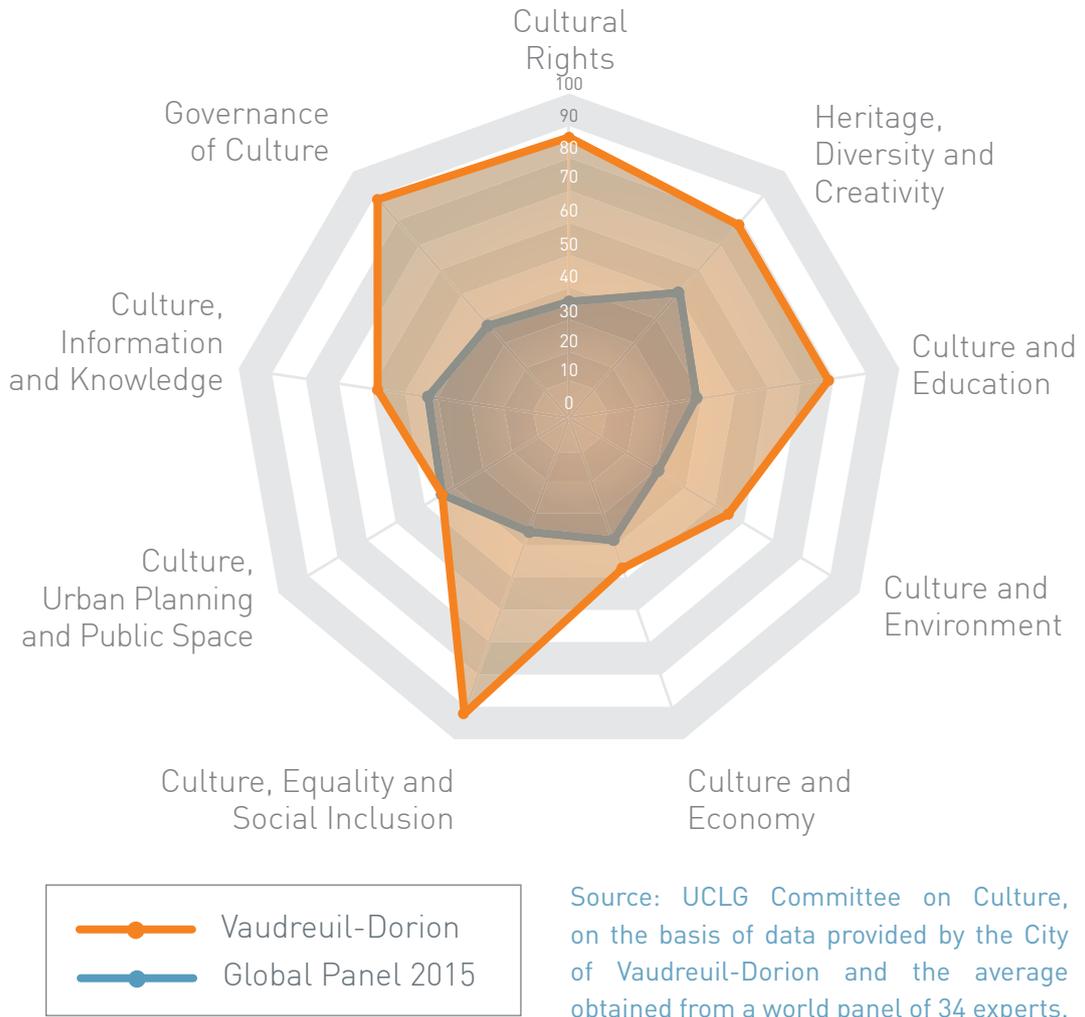
As can be seen in figure 1¹, Vaudreuil-Dorion obtained overall results well above the global average. The city is particularly laudable for the areas of “6. Culture, Equity, and Social Inclusion” (with a score of 91.67%, significantly higher than the worldwide mean of 35%) ; “9. Governance of culture” (with a score of 88.64%, well above the global score of 37%), and “1. Cultural rights” (86.25 %, compared to the international mark of 35%).

The city also received high marks for “2. Heritage, Diversity, and Creativity” (with 79.17%, above the global score of 50%), “3. Culture and Education” (78.75%, above the worldwide average of 38%), and “8. Culture, Information, and Knowledge” (58.33%, compared to 43% internationally).

The city received its lowest marks in the areas of “4. Culture and Environment” (with a score of 53.75%, compared to the worldwide mean of 30%); “5. Culture and Economy” (with a score of 46.88%, compared to the worldwide mean of 38%), and “7. Culture, Urban Planning, and Public Space (with a mark of 43.75%, the only areas where Vaudreuil-Dorion received a score just slightly below the global score of 44%).

¹ The Culture 21: Actions guide asks cities to provide a score between 1 and 9 for each of the 100 actions that conforms to Culture 21: Actions. For each action, a score between 1 and 3 corresponds to an “embryonic stage”; a score from 4 to 6 indicates a “development stage”; and an evaluation between 7 and 9 established the town at a “well developed stage”. The percentage figures accompanying each of the commitments from Culture 21: Actions are derived from the scores between 1 and 9, and are issued to every action analysed.

Figure 1 : Self-assessment of Vaudreuil-Dorion and Global Panel 2015





CULTURAL RIGHTS

In the area of cultural rights, Vaudreuil-Dorion was awarded a score of 86.25%, much higher than the worldwide average of 35%.

This area forms a central pillar of cultural policies and actions in Vaudreuil-Dorion, yet it is not yet explicitly named or outlined in policies. While there is no specific document on cultural rights, the issue underlies most policies adopted, such as the 2013 cultural policy, or the Je m'engage pour la culture [My commitment to culture] Declaration in 2016. Vaudreuil-Dorion also particularly stands out for the broad and active engagement by citizens in cultural practices and in cultural creation. The city's cultural policies and actions, especially through the Je suis [I am...] programme, all contribute to encouraging active participation in creation and cultural life. This also turns citizens into genuine bearers and stakeholders in culture, while simultaneously promoting the full exercise of their cultural rights. This programme also pays special attention to the most vulnerable individuals and groups in the area, such as disabled or the elderly persons.

Nine (9) out of ten (10) actions in this area were assessed at a "well-developed" level. Prioritisation, decision-making, implementation, or evaluation of cultural policies help to fortify significant citizen participation. Such involvement may include more frequent citizen consultation and participation, as well as in drafting cultural policy. This may also incorporate the presence of citizens, artists, and civil society organisations in various committees, city governance structures, and in event management. Furthermore, there are also minimum service standards for basic cultural services, but due to the very rapid increase in the area's population, the city is in a period of significant transition and relative investment. Finally, there is currently a detailed level of analysis on the obstacles to participation in cultural life for certain citizen groups, such as persons with disabilities, yet some groups were identified as lacking representation.



HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY

In this area, Vaudreuil-Dorion was awarded a score of 79.17%, above the worldwide average of 50%.

Ten (10) out of twelve (12) actions in this area were assessed at a “well-developed” level. The city has a Leisure and Culture Directorate that is specifically charged with cultural policies and the cultural dimension of other public policies. Through its work in cultural mediation, the directorate collaborates with many other areas for intervention, particularly the social sector. There is also an adequate budget allocated to local cultural policies.

Vaudreuil-Dorion is laudable in this area thanks to the “I am...” programme. The programme encourages meetings between different population groups through public and participative cultural activities, framed within the context of the city’s strong interculturality. The programme is especially noteworthy for its pursuit of artistic excellence through a closer proximity to inhabitants and their initiatives, specifically with co-creation between citizens and professional artists. In addition, local productions and artists have been prioritised by city policy. As a result they are represented in a significant and balanced way in all cultural activities throughout the region.

The “I am...” programme has created and supported both organisations and spaces centred on training, creation, and production of cultural expressions, especially for citizens. Due to significant population growth, these structures are not able to meet the growing demand for creative spaces and facilities. However, Fab Lab projects and artist residencies are currently being planned. With regard to support for the arts, Vaudreuil-Dorion is primarily focused on funding and support for cultural mediation.

In terms of linguistic diversity, there are laws in Quebec that protect French as a minority language in Canada, to which municipalities must adhere. There is also a considerable level of reflection around other minority languages in Vaudreuil-Dorion. The city seeks to open up as much as possible to its citizens, to the extent permitted by law, such as through a number of activities.

With respect to heritage, there are legal protection mechanisms, as well as funding and promotion policies in place. However, some initiatives seem to focus more on tangible heritage, and there are some shortcomings in landscape and intangible heritage.

Vaudreuil-Dorion had two (2) out of twelve (12) actions in the “development stage”. This pertained to scientific culture, which was underrepresented aside from a few isolated initiatives, as well as to international cultural cooperation, which is currently under development.



CULTURE AND EDUCATION

In this area, Vaudreuil-Dorion received a score of 78.75%, above the worldwide average of 38%.

It should be noted that education is a provincial responsibility in Quebec. As a result, under this commitment the municipality only acts within the area of non-formal education, and in consultation with the school community.

In the area of culture and education, the city was assessed to have eight (8) out of ten (10) actions at a “well-developed” level. The city is also quite notable for the I am... programme, which carries out a number of cultural mediation activities in schools, and thereby empowering students to actively participate in cultural creation. However, participants pointed out the need to broaden this action, such as through artists’ residencies in schools. In general, primary and secondary education provides students with cultural skills and knowledge through school curricula, activities, programmes, and local cultural resources which are effectively promoted. Similarly, outside of the formal education system, the vast majority of the region’s cultural institutions have developed educational activities, and allocate a substantial part of their budget to them. These activities are also effectively advertised through online portals such as the City’s website and the Trois-Lacs School Board.

There are a number of links with schools for collaboration with the classroom environment, but these are not yet systematic. There appears to be a lack of a permanent coordination mechanism with all the schools throughout the region. There is a Committee on culture in the School Board, represented by the V-D Culture 21 Committee which was set up by the city to bring together all of the region’s cultural stakeholders. However, there is no formal platform or network that is specifically dedicated to uniting all actors involved in culture and education.

With regard to training on management and cultural policies, the city offers training on cultural mediation for professionals that work and participate with the Regional Unit for Innovation in Cultural Mediation. This group provides training, networking, and support for local start-up initiatives in this area.

The city had two (2) actions assessed in a “development stage” for the current amount of arts education. This is mostly private in Vaudreuil-Dorion, and some disciplines are not represented. This level of development also reflected the small presence of cultural rights in education programmes and training activities in cultural sectors.



CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Vaudreuil-Dorion received a score of 53.75% in this area, above the worldwide average of 30%.

In the field of culture and environment, the city was assessed to have five (5) out of ten (10) actions at a “well-developed” level. Formally, the Vaudreuil-Dorion Cultural Policy and the 2016 Declaration highlight the connections between culture and environment, while the city’s environmental policy (which is still being developed) should integrate culture. There is a collaborative effort between the departments of culture and environment, as well as with the municipality which is in charge of environmental policy, embodied in the V-D Culture 21 Committee. However, despite recognition in official municipal documents, links between culture and the environment do not currently seem to be under substantial development.

The city had two (2) actions in a “developmental” stage with respect to recognising and promoting the cultural interest of natural spaces, in addition to the sustainable use of public spaces, notably thanks to community gardening initiatives.

The city had three (3) actions at an “embryonic” stage. These were for its recognition of gastronomy as an important element of local culture, the preservation and dissemination of knowledge, as well as for the city’s traditional practices for the sustainable use of natural resources. However, it should be noted that these concepts are not characteristic feature of local identity. Finally, there are no authorities or platforms that link public, private, and civil society organisations presently working on the relationship between the areas of cultural and environmental.



CULTURE AND ECONOMY

Vaudreuil-Dorion received a score of 46.88% in this area, above the worldwide average of 38%.

Eight (8) out of twelve (12) actions were assessed at a “well-developed” level in this area. Overall, the relationship between culture and economy in Vaudreuil-Dorion is quite new and emerging. Local economic development strategies, whether municipal, regional, or by the territory’s economic stakeholders, include few specific distinctive features of the culture-based economy. These also do not emphasise culture as an important economic sector. The Vaudreuil-Soulanges Chambre of Commerce and Industry has begun showing interest in this area and appears to be aware of the importance of fostering links that bring together culture and the economy. A number of initiatives have emerged around this issue. The Chamber established a committee on art and culture that includes artists on its administrative boards. In 2015, it also organised a day of reflection on the topic called “Imagine Vaudreuil-Soulanges”. The event brought together 140 stakeholders from the fields of business, culture, and tourism. The Chamber is also represented in the V-D Culture 21 Committee. Furthermore, there are a number of partnerships between cultural actors and companies, such as Art in the Vineyard, but these are generally isolated initiatives. Similarly, corporate social responsibility programmes rarely include issues and projects related to culture.

Overall, it should be noted that the support and development of cultural businesses and industries in Quebec is driven by provincial action. This particularly refers to the Société de développement des entreprises culturelles [Society for the Development of Cultural Businesses] (SODEC). As a result, municipalities tend to intervene less in this sector. The city of Vaudreuil-Dorion received scores indicative of a “well-developed” stage for its actions on contract and compensation programmes, as well as for its recognition of copyrights and other related rights that are ensured through provincial and federal legislation. At a “developmental” stage were actions that involve provincial government intervention, particularly the analysis of economic contributions by cultural actors to the local economy. Also at this level were spaces for information and training on copyright, as well as on economic models connected to shared creativity practices and new forms of distribution. The same score was given for programmes devoted to access to employment and integration in the cultural sector, as well as for financing mechanisms for cultural projects that enable market integration.

The city had three (3) actions at an “embryonic” stage. These were for the level to which the local government promotes the existence of public or mixed economic models enabling development or growth of voluntary contributions. Also at this stage was the value placed on trades in the area, and the level of innovation required. Furthermore, the local tourism model was also assessed at an embryonic stage.



CULTURE, EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Vaudreuil-Dorion was particularly noteworthy in this area, and was awarded a score of 91.67%, well above the worldwide average of 35%.

In the field of culture and equity and social inclusion, the city was assessed to have eleven (11) out of twelve (12) actions at a “well-developed” level. Vaudreuil-Dorion is also especially praiseworthy in this area for the “I am...” programme. This initiative pursues social goals through cultural actions and cultural mediation, such as social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, rebuilding a diverse community, resolving health issues, integrating persons with disabilities, inclusion of the elderly, conflict resolution, and youth development, among others.

The programme is run by the municipality in an open, decompartmentalised way, and local strategies for the social sphere specifically include a cultural dimension. The municipality works alongside a number of partners from the social, health, education, and community sectors, which all maintain a core focus on culture in their activities. Cultural organisations in receipt of public support must use their initiatives to include persons or groups in difficult social situations. To reinforce and strengthen the impacts of this broad action, participants noted the importance of developing more platforms for overall coordination among stakeholders, with shared planning mechanisms.

In general, factors determining the cultural vulnerability or fragility of certain groups or individuals in the region are formally analysed by the organisations working alongside these groups. In addition, all cultural mediation activities are analysed for their impacts. Within the field of interculturality, there is special training in the health and education sectors, as well as for municipal officials. This helps to identify and address cultural factors that may impede access to certain public services.

The only action Vaudreuil-Dorion had in a “developmental” stage was related to the social economy, a field which is currently being developed by the city. Only a few organisations in the sector have integrated culture, such as the Red Zebra organisation.



CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

In this area, Vaudreuil-Dorion received a score of 43.75%, slightly below the worldwide average of 44%.

In general, the links between culture, urban planning, and public space are relatively new for Vaudreuil-Dorion, and the city is beginning to take action in this area.

Vaudreuil-Dorion only had one (1) out of twelve (12) actions in this area at a “well-developed” stage, and it pertained to heritage. There is an inventory on tangible and natural heritage, in addition to established mechanisms for conservation. However, there appear to be some shortcomings in identifying intangible heritage, as well as in the accessibility and promotion of heritage, especially natural.

The city had eight (8) out of twelve (12) actions assessed at a “well-developed” level in this area. The Vaudreuil-Dorion urban plan refers to some cultural resources such as heritage or outstanding landscapes. However, overall, the cultural dimension is not very present. It should be noted that the city is beginning to integrate and draw on culture in the revitalisation of specific sectors, such as Harwood Boulevard. The city also carries out pilot exercises on citizen participation with co-design and tactical urban planning activities, alongside the municipality’s cultural services.

With regard to landscape, in the cultural, natural, and public art spheres there are isolated activities and reflections, but there is no established or cohesive development programme for these specific fields. In addition, cultural activities are often carried out in public spaces such as streets, squares, and other shared areas throughout the city. However, this issue has not been extensively considered, particularly with regard to the preservation, promotion, use, and transformation of public space into cultural environments that are used as essential resources for cultural interaction and participation. Certain examples of cultural infrastructure, such as the “I am...” meeting centre, have been thought out and planned in order to contribute to a broader cultural ecosystem. While there are some architectural guidelines for heritage zones, there is no generalised model to guarantee architectural quality or cohesive identity throughout the territory.

Vaudreuil-Dorion received scores that placed three (3) actions at an “embryonic” stage of development. These included the current evaluations of the cultural impact on the region’s management policies, transportation and urban mobility policies around citizens’ access to cultural life, as well as the identification of spaces that carry a symbolic and cultural importance.



CULTURE, INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Vaudreuil-Dorion received a mark of 58.33% in this area, higher than the worldwide average of 43%.

Overall, in this area participants noted that Culture 21: Actions is not well-adapted to the reality of a small city like Vaudreuil-Dorion, with only 37,000 inhabitants. Consequently, two actions in this area were not evaluated because they were seen to be particularly inadequate in view of the local environment. Specifically, this was action (e) regarding the existence of systems for observation and research or analysis on cultural realities, including their interaction with other areas of human development that are connected to universities, government, and civil society. It also pertained to action (g) on the analysis of the relationship between basic cultural processes and social innovation. Furthermore, a number of actions in this area are generally supported by provincial or federal levels of government.

Vaudreuil-Dorion had four (4) actions rated at a “well-developed” stage, relating to the legal guarantee of the freedom of expression, respect for cultural diversity and for private life, and the existence of mechanisms for protecting and observing these freedoms. With respect to Quebec and Canada, these issues are guaranteed by provincial and federal law. As a result, a municipal initiative does not appear to be necessary. In addition, local city media have adopted internal policies with goal of reflecting a plurality of opinions and messages. Finally, the city’s cultural institutions promote the open sharing of knowledge and information to all citizens, while also encouraging citizen education.

The city received marks that placed three (3) actions in a “developmental” stage. These reflected the current policies on access to free and pluralistic information. Another issue in this category was the present analysis of obstacles hindering citizens’ access to, and use of, information technologies for cultural purposes, which is occasionally carried out by the province. This score was also given for the existence of training activities on current or emerging forms of cultural reproduction and access, including copyright, copyleft, and open access, among others.

Vaudreuil-Dorion had two (2) actions at an “embryonic” stage. One was focused on forms of creation, production, and digital distribution, focusing on residents and favouring cultural democracy. The second was for the existence of international cooperation policies and programmes for cultural stakeholders.



GOVERNANCE OF CULTURE

In this area, Vaudreuil-Dorion was awarded a score of 88.64%, well above the worldwide average of 37%.

On governance of culture, the city had ten (10) out of eleven (11) actions assessed in a “developmental” stage. The city is particularly noteworthy for setting up spaces and mechanisms for citizen coordination and participation, as well as creating public participation authorities. Under the “I am...” programme, the city worked along with 120 partners in this area. The creation of the Vaudreuil-Dorion Culture 21 Committee should also be noted as a good practice. It brings together stakeholders from all sectors of society, including culture, social, health, education, sport, and many others, to decompartmentalise these internally and externally. The aim is to do so along with a number of municipal services and departments. This includes public and private stakeholders, as well as citizens throughout the territory such as Chambers of Commerce, the Health Centre, and community organisations, among others, as well as to involve the regional and provincial governments. This cross-cutting committee aims to create a common vision of the role of culture in local development. It also strives encourage each of its members through, among other initiatives, a declaration applicable to, and inclusive of, all individuals.

The city developed a cultural policy and an action plan based explicitly on Agenda 21 for culture and Culture 21: Actions. It has also brought together public, civic, and private initiatives in a shared cross-cutting project. Cultural institutions receiving public support transparently account for and evaluate their impacts. Citizens are generally represented on the administrative boards of organisations and the region’s cultural events. This subsequently encourages participation in the management of cultural activities. The city recognises and supports management practices that express local culture. There are measures and training geared toward reinforcing civil society organisations that contribute to cultural life, particularly thanks to the Regional Unit for Innovation in Cultural Mediation, CLD, and the Montérégie Council of Culture, as well as a number of artist collectives.

There are permanent frameworks for delegating responsibilities and collaboration among local, regional, and provincial governments, yet the distribution of spheres of action with the regional county municipality seems to require some clarification.

Vaudreuil-Dorion received a score reflective of a “developmental” stage for the action relating to existing independent platforms for civil society that involve inhabitants and cultural actors from all sectors.



CONCLUSIONS

Based on the observations made throughout the self-assessment, the following conclusions can be drawn:

» The strongest areas for the city of Vaudreuil-Dorion related to culture and sustainable development were commitments “6. Culture, Equity, and Social Inclusion”, “9. Governance of Culture”, and “1. Cultural Rights”. The “I am...” programme is an example of a good practice for other cities on the importance of public spaces, as it is based on cultural action geared towards rebuilding social cohesion in the community, framed within the context of strong interculturality. The city has worked in a cross-cutting way with other spheres of actions, including community, social, health, education, or leisure activities. The city also has significant experience in citizens’ active participation in cultural creation. It has developed tools with a strong potential to enable this, including an approach focused on artistic excellence that promotes the full exercise of their cultural rights. Finally, the city has developed a remarkable approach to cross-cutting, horizontal, and participative governance of culture.

» The areas where the city should focus more attention, and thereby inspire the approaches taken by other cities, are “4. Culture and Environment”, “5. Culture and Economy”, and particularly the issue of “7. Culture, Urban Planning, and Public Space”, the only area where Vaudreuil-Dorion received a score just slightly below the worldwide average.



ANNEX 1 : PARTICIPANTS TO THE WORKSHOP

ACTORS OF THE PILOT CITY WORKSHOP

NAME - SURNAME	POSITION
Vincent Bastien	Entrepreneur and citizen
Daniel Bissonnette	Director – Vaudreuil-Soulanges Regional Museum
Monica Brinkman	Artist
Hugues Charbonneau	Division manager - Environment (SDAT)
Céline Chartier	Municipal councillor
Rénald Gabriele	Municipal councillor
Robert A. Laurence	Municipal councillor
Diane Lavallée	Division manager - Permits and Inspections (SDAT)
Louise LeBlond-Vallée	Director – Trestler House
Sophie Leduc	Head of public health programmes, social development, and community development – CISSS Montérégie-West
Marie-Julie McNeil	Community organiser – CISSS Montérégie-West
Mathieu Milijours	President - Vaudreuil-Soulanges Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Martin Paré	Councillor - Territory promotion (SDAT)
Natalie Poirier	Citizen
Marie-Andrée Prévost	General Director - Viva media
Philippe Roy	Citizen
Francine St-Denis	President - Trois-Lacs School Board
Julien Turcotte	Director – CLD, Vaudreuil-Soulanges



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