



Gander-New-Wes-Valley
Regional Council
of the
Rural Secretariat
Executive Council



*Activity Plan
2007~08*

Message from the Chair

As Chair of the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat and in accordance with Government's commitment to accountability, I hereby submit the Council's 2007-08 Activity Plan on behalf of its members, so as to indicate our accountability for the achievement of the objectives contained in the plan, pursuant to section 7(4) of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

Since our initial meeting in October 2005, members of the Council have devoted considerable time to the examination of the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of the region. This task has required each of us to think beyond our own community and to engage in long-term thinking.

As a result of our work to date, and despite the complex nature of the task, members of the Regional Council have attained a new level of understanding of both the challenges and opportunities in this region.

It is now clear that over the course of the current year, we must examine these challenges and opportunities closely if we are to identify priorities. In doing so we may succeed in re-creating the dynamic of collaboration and cooperation that was critical to the survival of our coastal communities for centuries. Only then will we recognize and engage those individual residents, organizations and businesses who share a common will and commitment with Government that will ensure the future sustainability and economic diversification of this region becomes a reality.

As an advisory body to Government, the members of the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council are committed to such a future. We will continue to build on our common understanding of the region and to devote our energies to the identification and advancement of regional priorities. Through the examination of studies and strategies, and by initiating opportunities to engage with representatives of the communities throughout the region, we are confident we will accomplish the essential goals of our mandate.

Sincerely,



Edythe Goodridge, Chair

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Regional Council Overview

The Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council is comprised of 11 members; 4 female and 7 male. Members of the Council have a variety of backgrounds that include; business, municipal representation, education, culture, social, environmental, tourism, and economic development. The Council has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region:

Name	Community
Edythe Goodridge, Chair	Salvage
Gail Hoyles, Provincial Representative	Gander
Derm Flynn, Alternative Representative	Appleton
Victor Cassell	Cottlesville
Mike Harkaway	Gander
Ross Trimm	Clarkes Head
Douglas Churchill	Glovertown South
Nadine Decker	Joe Batt's Arm
Wander Loder	Pike's Arm
David Regular	Summerford
Jim Snow	Lewisporte

The Council does not have a budget allocation. Meetings of the Council and associated costs are funded through the Rural Secretariat. The Secretariat also provides a staff position within the region.

The staff person for the Gander – New-Wes-Valley region is Tanya Noble. Tanya works out of Brookfield. Among other duties, she facilitates the work of the Council and provides its members with information resources.

Mandate

The mandate of the Regional Councils is:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities of a region.
- To review key regional economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, EI usage, economic diversity) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change over the next five years.
- To identify policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change.
- To advance regional cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic and social measures and to encourage regional partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- To nominate an individual to represent the region on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat.

Values

The core values explain the character of the organization we promote and the action statements guide behaviour. The core values of the Rural Secretariat which also guide the behaviour of the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council are as follows:

Core Values
Collaboration
Creativity
Empowerment
Inclusion
Learning Culture
Transparency
Trust

Collaboration	Each person is committed to working together effectively.
Creativity	Each person seeks and supports new ideas and approaches.
Empowerment	Each person is responsible for participating in discussions, making informed decisions and taking personal responsibility for their contributions.
Inclusion	Each person acknowledges others' views and perspectives and has the opportunity to express their own views.
Learning Culture	Each individual is recognized and valued for the skills they bring and have a desire to attain new knowledge and information.
Transparency	Each individual gives and shares open and objective advice based on sound information and principles.
Trust	Each person is open and supportive when participating in partnerships and follows through on requests and commitments.

Primary Partners

The primary partners of the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council include the Provincial Government's Rural Secretariat, its Provincial Council, and departments and agencies.

The Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council may also engage in discussion with individuals, groups and organizations within the region during the course of its investigation and identification of issues pertinent to its mandate.

Vision

The vision of the Rural Secretariat is of sustainable regions with healthy, educated, prosperous people living in safe, inclusive communities.

The work of the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat. Through its work, the Council is identifying priorities that contribute to regional sustainability. The Council is taking an inclusive approach to sustainability that considers economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the Regional Council for the next two planning cycles. It represents the longer-term goals which the Councils will be working towards as they move forward on the strategic directions of Government. The statement also identifies the indicators that will assist both the Council and the public in monitoring and evaluating the degree to which these goals are attained.

The mission statement of the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat is as follows:

By 2011, the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council will have participated in annual forums and annual dialogue with Government and within regions that will show the value of two-way conversations between citizens and Government.

Indicators:

- A clearly identified, long-term vision of sustainability for the region
- Ongoing two-way conversation between Government and citizens
- Citizens that are more informed about the social, cultural, environmental and economic conditions required for regional sustainability
- Enhanced regional input into priority and policy setting of Government
- Deliberative, purposeful, inclusive conversations that are informed and meaningful are becoming part of the business process for the Council and Government
- Government and citizens appreciate the kind of discussion that they have been having and see the value of these discussions
- Government and citizens are building trust

- Citizens and Government both feel ownership in the decision-making process and feel a shared sense of responsibility for regional sustainability
- Sustainable solutions are identified at the regional level
- Innovation and creativity is encouraged and supported at the regional level
- Regions have leaders who are influencing others as they adapt to the changing realities of their regions

This mission statement is written for the next four years, however, the work of the Council is looking ahead 15 years. Advancing regional sustainability takes time and involves a considerable learning process. Citizens and Government must build trust and must be willing to listen to and learn from each other.

Over the next four years, the Council will take initial steps to advance regional sustainability. First, regional priorities will be developed and communicated within regions and to Government departments. The next step will be to explore ways the Council together with regional partners and Government departments can work together to advance these priorities. Over time, these priorities will evolve as we make accomplishments and come to new understandings of the changes that are taking place within the region.

One of the ways the Council will work with Government is through representation on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat which meets directly with Cabinet and Deputy Ministers. This representative will contribute to the discussion of provincial priorities in the context of regional distinctions.

Issue/Context

In order to make decisions that will contribute to regional sustainability, the Council must have an understanding of the region, its challenges and its opportunities. The Council, as per its mandate, has been developing “a common, evidenced-based understanding of the economic, social, environmental and cultural realities of the region.” It has considered information on, among other things, demographics, labour market, and education levels. Each Council member was appointed based on their diverse backgrounds, and each contributes a broad knowledge base to the discussion. The Council has had to balance the roles of Government, individuals, groups and organizations within the region.

Based on the work they have completed to date the Council has developed an initial discussion document. This is intended to be a living document that identifies the direction for actions for long-term outcomes.

The Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council realizes that public policy significantly impacts upon regional sustainability. The Council has a real opportunity to influence the development of public policy. Identifying priorities is the first step in this process.

Priorities identified by the Council will be communicated to Government in three primary ways. First, the Council has communicated priorities directly to the Minister responsible for the Rural Secretariat. Second, the Council will discuss relevant priorities with Government departments. Finally, the Council will have a representative on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat, which meets directly with Cabinet and Deputy Ministers.

In moving the agenda forward for the upcoming year the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council will work on the following objectives:

Goals (or objectives):

1. By March 31, 2008 the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council will have refined its long-term vision for the sustainable development of the region.

Measure: Refinement of long-term regional vision for sustainable development

Indicator: Completion of a working document that is shared with regions and Government

2. By March 31, 2008 the Gander–New-Wes-Valley Regional Council will have clarified regional priorities that have been identified as key elements in attaining the vision.

Measure: Clarification of identified regional priorities

Indicators: More detailed information and discussion related to identified regional priorities

Initiation of the development of a framework to further guide discussion within the community and Government to advance regional priorities

3. By March 31, 2008 the communications process initiated in December 2006 is broadened to more citizens.

Measure: Communications engagement process is broadened

Indicator: Engagement of individuals or small groups within regions

Engagement of community groups, e.g., church groups, student councils, senior's groups, etc.

Engagement of formal groups, e.g., health boards, school boards, economic development organizations, etc.

Engagement of mixed groups that include representation from community and formal groups, as well as individuals within regions who have participated in previous engagement sessions

Feedback from the citizen engagement process informs the vision document and key priorities of the region

Appendix A

Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one Government entity. These directions are generally communicated by Government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents, and other communiqués. The Transparency and Accountability Act requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across Government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The directions related to the Rural Secretariat are as follows:

1. Title: Regional Partnership Development

Outcome Statement: Stronger and more dynamic regions.

Clarifying Statement: This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Regional Council in the areas of:

- Partnership Development
 - Within regions
 - Between Government and regions
- Forum for informed discussion and priority identification that links economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of regional sustainability.

Components of Strategic Direction	Included in activity plan	Activity has been implemented	Activity modified for inclusion in next activity plan
a. Partnership Development within regions, between Government and regions	✓		
b. Forum for informed discussion and priority identification that links economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of regional sustainability	✓		

2. **Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability**

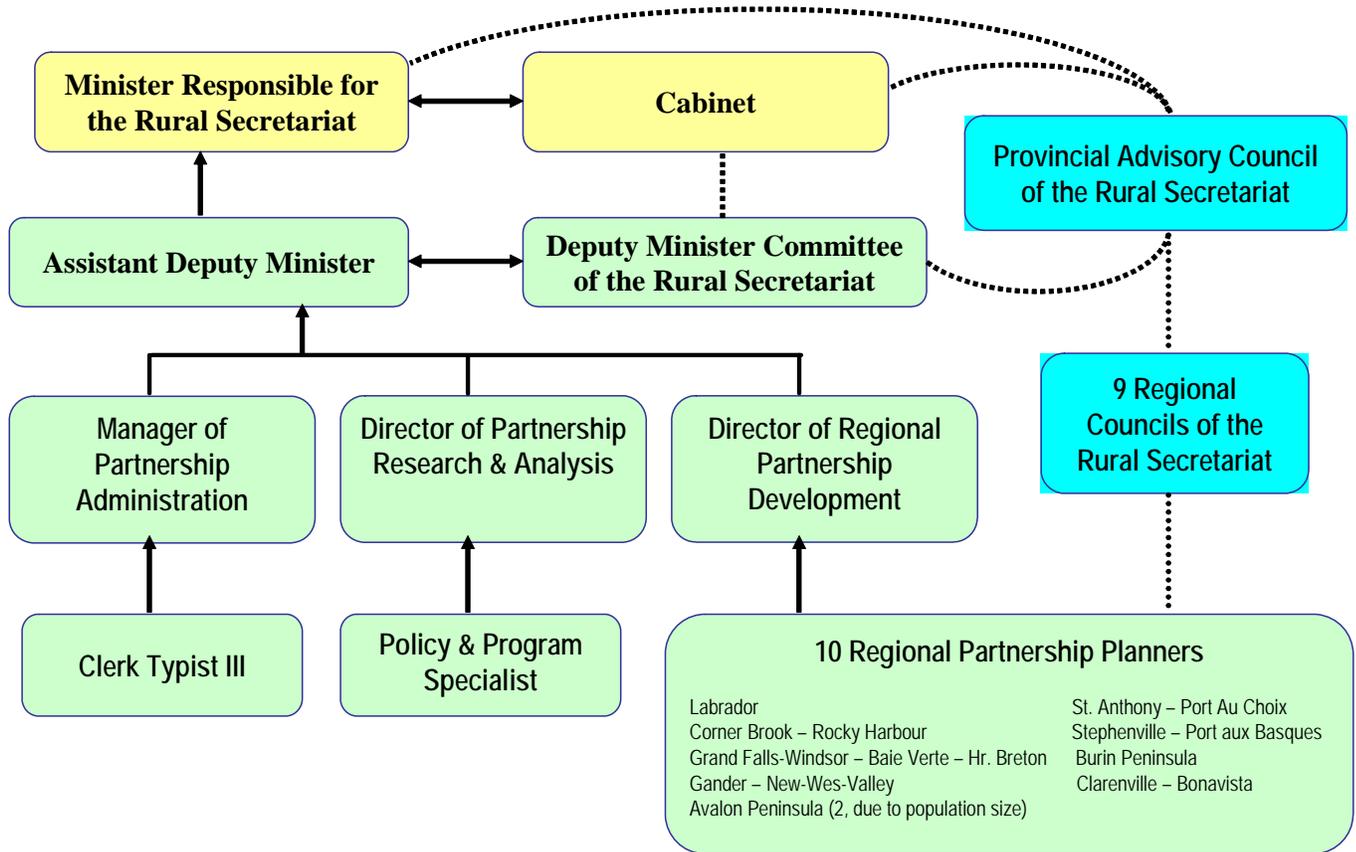
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

Clarifying Statement: This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Regional Council in the areas of:

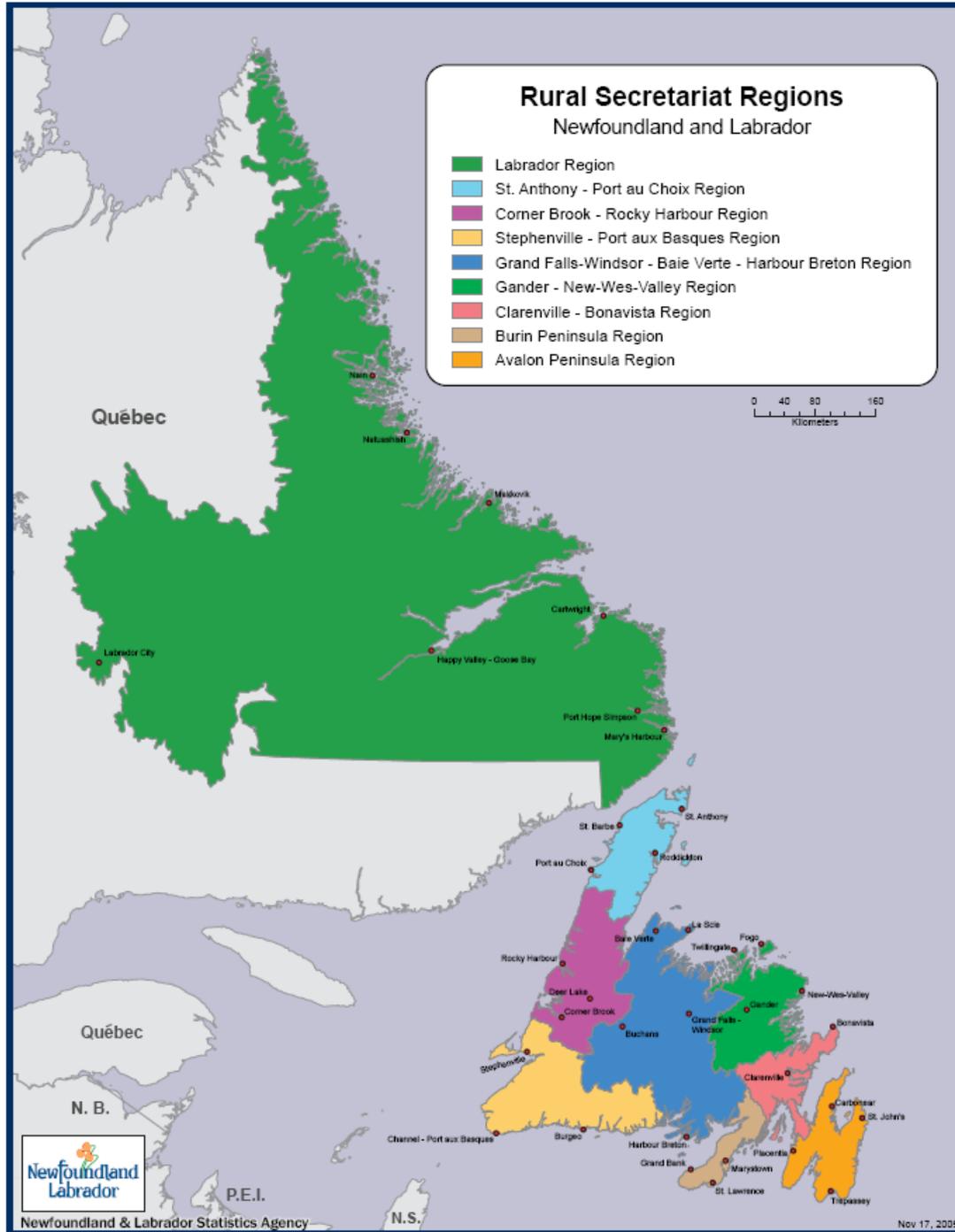
- Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy.

Components of Strategic Direction	Included in activity plan	Activity has been implemented	Activity modified for inclusion in next activity plan
Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy.			

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C



Mandate of the Rural Secretariat

The Rural Secretariat's mandate is to:

- Promote the well-being of all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador through a comprehensive and coordinated approach to economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of regional development.
- Act as the focal point for Government to work with local and regional partners to build strong and dynamic regions and communities.
- Ensure that regional concerns are considered throughout the provincial Government and promoted at the federal level.
- Carry out research and analysis of economic and social issues affecting all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Help communities and regions identify and take advantage of growth opportunities.

Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat

Provincial Council Mandate:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities facing the province.
- To review key provincial economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, EI usage, economic diversity) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change over the next five years.
- To identify and advise Government on policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change.
- To advance cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic and social measures, and to encourage Government and community partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- To meet twice annually with the provincial Cabinet and deputy ministers to advance regional development priorities.
- To serve as an external sounding board for Government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will affect provincial and regional sustainability.

PHOTO CREDITS:



Morton's Harbour
Photo Compliments of Mary Snow



Burnside
Photo Compliments of Ed Vincent



St. Brendans
Photo Compliments of Transportation & Works



Tilting, Fogo Island
Photo Compliments of Transportation & Works



Deep Bay, Fogo Island
Photo Compliments of Mark Young



Change Islands
Photo Compliments of Lynn Pardy



Rural Secretariat

Executive Council

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