

*Clarenville-Bonavista  
Regional Council  
of the  
Rural Secretariat,  
Executive Council*

*Annual Activity Report  
2006-07*

## *Message from the Chair*

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We, as council members, have prepared the 2006-07 Annual Activity Report for the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. As Chairperson, I submit and sign this annual activity report on behalf of the council as a symbol of the council's accountability for the results achieved and any variances contained herein.

The mandate of the Regional Council for the Rural Secretariat is to advise government on the future sustainability of the Clarenville-Bonavista region. To be effective in this process, it has been important for council members to understand the key issues affecting current program development and future policy direction as these affect citizens residing in our 109 municipalities, Local Service Districts and unincorporated areas.

The contents of this report outline the council's activities for the twelve months covering the period of April 1, 2006 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007.

The Regional Council has focused on building an increased understanding of the issues related to demographic change, infrastructure status, skills development and industry linkages, private sector investment and opportunities, budgets, and the location of public services and programs. This increased understanding has assisted the council in its development of a Regional Vision 2020 document. The council has short-listed its priority areas for action with respect to program and policy advice to government.

Throughout this past year, the Regional Council has initiated a formal engagement process involving municipalities, Local Service Districts and other regional stakeholders. The council has actively participated in a formal community engagement process and established priorities for action. Over the coming months, the council will continue to work towards delving deeper into the policy issues surrounding the regional priorities and will continue the citizen engagement process to further refine these priorities. This process will assist the council in its ability to provide critical and informative advice to the government on policy change and program enhancement to support the sustainability of the Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat region.

It has been an exciting and informative year and the council is eager to continuing this work.

Sincerely,



Ms. Violet Parsons  
Chair  
Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

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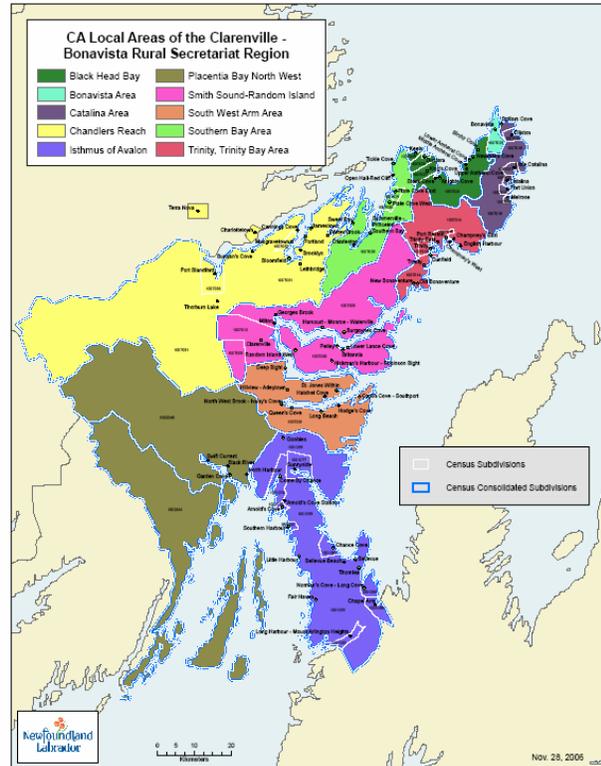
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# Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat

## Regional Overview

The Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat region includes the Bonavista Peninsula, Clarenville area and the Isthmus- extending from the tip of the Bonavista Peninsula to Terra Nova, Swift Current and Long Harbour. Deep rooted in John Cabot's discovery of this province in 1497, the region has a long history in diversification of people, culture, and economic activity.

The population of the Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat region is estimated at 28,689 in 2006 living in 109 communities.<sup>1</sup> This is a decline of 9.8% from 1999 (compared with a decline of 4.5% for the province overall). The net migration loss between 2001-2005 was 1.1%. The provincial new migration loss for the same period was 0.5%. The population is expected to drop to about 27,700 by 2011, a further decline of 3.6% (compared to decline of 1.7% for the province overall).



The largest communities in the region are Bonavista and Clarenville, with each having populations over 4000. Arnold's Cove and Catalina are considered medium-sized communities, with populations between 1000-2000. As well, there are approximately 105 other towns with less than one thousand residents and these small communities constituted 44% of the region's population.

Population decline impacts all age groups and impacts on the size of the labour supply. The age 15-64 group (those of labour force age excluding seniors) is estimated at 19,995 in 2006, a decline of 9.5% from 1999. This age group is expected to fall by 4.9% to 2011, outpacing overall population decline. This difference can be attributed to continued out-migration from the region combined with fewer youth entering the labour market.

<sup>1</sup> The population data used is based information published by the Economics and Statistics Branch, February 2007.

Within the ages 15-64 age group, 21.9% are ages 55 to 64. This means, in broad terms, that about one in five individuals will exit the labour force over the next decade. This movement out of the labour force will create “replacement” demand for labour in the region for younger workers. While not all retiring workers will likely be replaced (i.e., firms will substitute investment in machinery and equipment for labour) there will be opportunities for youth in the region in the future, probably at higher wages rates as the labour market tightens.

While the population is declining, the labour market, measured in terms of the number of people with earned income, was stable between 1999 and 2004 at about 15,500 individuals.<sup>2</sup> After adjusting for inflation, the average earned income per worker employed grew by 12.5% over this period, outpacing provincial real growth of 9.0%. Growth in real earned income also allowed for strong growth in real personal income per capita over this period (14.8% versus 15.2% for the province overall). This trend means, however, that personal income per capita in the region is not converging toward the provincial average. Per capita income in the region was 90.3% of the provincial average in 2004 compared to 90.6% in 1999.

In summary, while the population of the region is declining, the labour market is stable, and those that remain are experiencing relatively strong earned income growth.

Indicator	Clareville - Bonavista	Percent of Province
<b>Total Population</b>		
1999	31,794	6.0%
2006	28,689	5.6%
2011	27,655	5.5%
<b>Population Ages 15-64</b>		
1999	22,096	5.9%
2006	19,995	5.5%
2011	19,020	5.4%
<b>Population Ages 55-64</b>	2006	6.3%
<b>Number of People Employed</b>		
1999	15,600	6.0%
2004	15,500	5.7%
<b>Earned Income per Worker Employed</b>		
1999 (\$2004)	\$19,800	81.4%
2004	\$22,300	84.1%
<b>Personal Income per capita</b>		
1999 (\$2004)	\$16,200	90.6%
2004	\$18,600	90.3%
<b>Employment by Occupation</b>		
Fishery (harvesting + processing)	2,765	11.9%
Primary activity (excl fish harvesting)	500	5.8%
Manufacturing (excl. fish processing)	830	9.1%
Construction	2,980	7.1%
Services sector (incl. public admin)	5,605	4.6%
Health and education services	1,085	4.2%
<b>EI beneficiaries</b>		
1999	8,610	8.4%
2005	8,150	8.1%
<b>Educational Attainment Ages 18-64</b>		
University Degree	1,305	3.4%
Post secondary/Trades certificate	6,145	5.7%
High school/some post secondary	3,905	5.0%
Not completed high school	7,975	7.1%

Source: Calculated from Community Accounts website and Economic Research and Analysis, Department of Finance ([www.communityaccounts.ca](http://www.communityaccounts.ca), [www.economics.gov.nl.ca](http://www.economics.gov.nl.ca))

On an occupational basis, the fishery (harvesting and processing) employed 2,765 in 2000, or about 20% of employment, in the Clareville-Bonavista region compared to 10% for the province overall.

<sup>2</sup> Employment and earned income data is based on tax filer residency information not place of work. For example, those working in Alberta but filing taxes in the Clareville-Bonavista region would show as being employed and earning income in the Clareville-Bonavista region.

<sup>3</sup> This meant that 11.9% of total fisheries related employment in the province, but only 5.6% of the population, accrued to the Clarenville-Bonavista region.

The overall occupational structure in the region is weighted toward goods producing seasonal industries. In 2000, the fishery, other primary activity and construction accounted for 45.4% of employment in the region, and 44.2% of EI beneficiaries in 2005. Overall, there were 8,150 EI beneficiaries in the region in 2005, or just over one EI claim for every two people with earned income. The region accounted for 6.8% of total provincial EI beneficiaries in 2005 but only 5.6% of the population.

The educational profile of workers in the region is generally aligned with the occupational structure. Just over 1,300 individuals between ages 18-64 (6.8%) had a university degree in 2000 compared with over 6,100 individuals with a trades or college level certificate (32.8%). Overall, therefore, 38.5% of individuals ages 18-64 in the Clarenville-Bonavista region had completed post secondary studies. (This compares to 43.6% for the province overall).

At the same time, 41.3% of this age group in the region has not graduated from high school. While many of these workers have acquired on-the-job skills, their earnings growth potential, and their ability to upgrade and transfer their existing skill sets, may be limited. There are some age specific differences of importance for this education level. For example, considering older workers only (those ages 55-64), 62.1% have not completed high school. Conversely, considering younger workers only (those ages 25-29), 36.0% fall in this category.

## *Regional Council Overview*

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**The Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council** consists of men and women from larger and smaller communities with backgrounds in social, business, labour, cultural and environmental development.

The Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council is comprised of fourteen members; seven female and seven male. Members of the council have a variety of backgrounds that include health, education, municipal governance, agriculture, culture, business, skill development for women and financial management.

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<sup>3</sup> Occupational and educational attainment data is sourced from the 2001 Census. Data from the 2006 Census will not be available until 2008.

The council has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Community</i>
Violet Parson- Chairperson	Bloomfield
Leo Bonnell	Clareville
William ( Bill ) Abbott	Bonavista
Donald Mifflin	Bonavista
Shelly Blackmore	Port Union
Edith Samson	Port Union
Marilyn Coles-Hayley	Elliston
Darryl Johnson	Port Union
Barry Pearce	Port Rexton
Lisa Browne	Clareville
Paul Tilley	Shoal Harbour
Maria Moran	St. Jones Within
Mervin Wiseman	North Harbour
Fay Matthews	Arnold's Cove

*\*For an updated listing of council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>*

The council does not have a budget. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Rural Secretariat. The Rural Secretariat also funds a staff position within the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the council and is responsible for the facilitation of the work of the council. The staff person for the Clareville-Bonavista region is Colin Holloway. Colin works out of Bonavista and his office is co-located within the College of the North Atlantic.

## *Mandate*

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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.

## *Highlights and Accomplishments*

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The first meeting of the year for the council was held in Arnold's Cove on May 11. This meeting also presented the council with the opportunity to begin engaging communities, on the issues and considerations for the future sustainability of the region, by actively engaging the Town Council.

Two more meetings were held in Clarenville on August 31 and September 21. These were preparatory meetings for the council to fine tune its presentation for Rural Dialogue Day which was scheduled for October 16-17 in Rocky Harbour. The purpose of this presentation was to highlight the work of the Regional Council, its preliminary ideas for the future sustainability of the region and a set of recommendations on the required steps to move the vision forward.

On November 15, members of the Regional Council participated in a focused session on the demographic changes in the province and the impacts these trends would have on the region and the province over the next 10 -20 years.

The third Regional Council meeting took place in Norman's Cove on November 20. Mayors and Chairpersons of Local services Districts were invited to participate in a discussion on the issues and opportunities in the region and to highlight possible policy areas for change.

Late in 2006, the staff of the Rural Secretariat Provincial Office revised its website. As part of the work required making these changes, the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council, through one of its members, Lisa Browne, developed articles on the region and highlighted the insightful planning taking place in the town of Clarenville, as well as, the development of a new

partnership between the community and the South American community of Peurto Padre, Cuba. The full article can be viewed at: <http://www.clarenville.net/cubaproject.html>.

In January 2007, the Regional Council consulted with local community leaders, including mayors and Local Service Districts which highlighted the need to explore different representation on the Regional Council, including youth representation.

In January, as well, the council provided advice to regional staff on how to proceed with the community engagement process for the region. Commencing on January 28, the council consulted with citizens on the Rural Secretariat, the Regional Councils and sought advice on the issues affecting the future sustainability of the region.

By March 31, the council had participated in seven sessions, actively engaging 64 individuals and 23 government departments and community-based organizations. Some of the emerging themes stemming from the sessions include: (1) Why people choose to stay and live in rural Newfoundland and Labrador; (2) Marketing strengths within the region; (3) Being committed to the future sustainability of the region and the province; (4) Role identification for community, private sector and government in rural development opportunities; (5) Waste management; (6) Community education and (7) Regional cooperation. A full description of the Community Engagement process can be found on the Rural Secretariat website at: (<http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/communityengagement.asp>).

The last two meetings of the year took place in Elliston on January 23 and in Port Blandford on March 15-16. The Regional Council invited in Mayors and Deputy Mayors from the communities of Trinity Bay North, Little Catalina, Elliston and Bonavista to provide highlights on what things are going well for their respective communities and to identify changes anticipated over the next 15-20 years.

The March 15-16 meeting provided an opportunity for the Regional Council to invite in key individuals who would provide information on the three priority areas for action for the Council: (1) Employment and Resource Development; (2) Community Collaboration and Partnership Development and (3) Health, Education and Social Programs. Discussion topics included community education, skill development, leadership development, health and well-being, industry sustainability, and the community-based voluntary sector. The council will use the information of this meeting to further advance its list of priority issues and to begin engaging government.

## *Opportunities and Challenges Ahead*

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The opportunities and the challenges facing the Regional Council will not likely change, at least in the short-term. The work of the Rural Secretariat and the Regional Councils is long-term. Understanding the factors impacting regional sustainability is complicated; often impacted by local, regional and provincial issues. As a result, this section may continue to highlight select topics such as collaboration, long-term thinking, citizen engagement and developing a vision as key topics.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration, as the Regional Council defines it, requires a spirit of cooperation and a willingness to make decisions that will maximize benefits for the whole region and not just individual communities. This kind of collaboration provides opportunities and benefits that would not otherwise be possible. It also poses a challenge for individuals to step out of their 'comfort zones' and look at issues differently. While the citizen engagement process has sparked interest in opportunities for regional cooperation and resource sharing, further dialogue is required between the council, local leaders and government.

### **Long-term thinking**

Long-term thinking will continue to be both an opportunity and a challenge. Thinking long-term, in the context of the work of the Regional Council, provides an opportunity to set a shared goal for the region and to, collectively, define the steps required to achieve the goal. Many people are starting to realize that we must plan for our collective future. Many, however, see this as outside the day-to-day operational needs for a community or a region. The citizen engagement process will aim to increase the understanding of communities to move towards long-term thinking.

### **Citizen Engagement**

There has proven to be an important opportunity for citizens to directly influence public policy development. This citizen engagement process has been purposeful and deliberate to engage citizens in a two-way conversation with regional government representatives and community-based organizations. This process has not been limited to the citizens that sit on the Regional Councils of the Rural Secretariat; rather there has been a process for the broader citizenship to engage in a discussion about the future policy directions of government that support the sustainability of the Clarenville-Bonavista region. The challenge will be to truly open our collective minds, listen to each other and discuss issues in a respectful and positive manner. These discussions will continue to consider the SARA Principle under the five themes or pillars for regional sustainability while stressing the importance of social, economic, cultural and environmental aspects of the region.

## **Vision Development**

The vision document that has been developed by the Regional Council is not intended to achieve a final form, but rather the intention is for it to continue to be a working document, one which changes over time. This change will reflect the continued advice of the Regional Council and the input from citizens living throughout the region. The vision document has identified what we want to see 15 to 20 years out. Today that time frame is 2022-2027. In five years time, that time frame will be 2027-2032. As priorities are accomplished new priorities will be identified. This will provide an opportunity for the Regional Council to be informed about what is moving and changing in our regions, where the next opportunity will be and where the next challenge will be.

It will also provide a challenge for all involved to have faith in the process and realize that it will take time until these priorities are accomplished. The challenges facing rural Newfoundland and Labrador did not occur in a short-term; it is important for us to understand and accept that the outcomes of our combined efforts will not be achieved in the short-term. It takes time to make significant change and it is important for this Regional Council to remain focused on the future, even in the midst of immediate challenges.

The Regional Council along with the Rural Secretariat will begin dialoging with provincial departments on the visions statements, and the priority areas for action. It will be important for all stakeholders to be open to this new process so that greater sustainability can be achieved for rural regions and the province.

# Appendix A

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## Strategic Directions

**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.

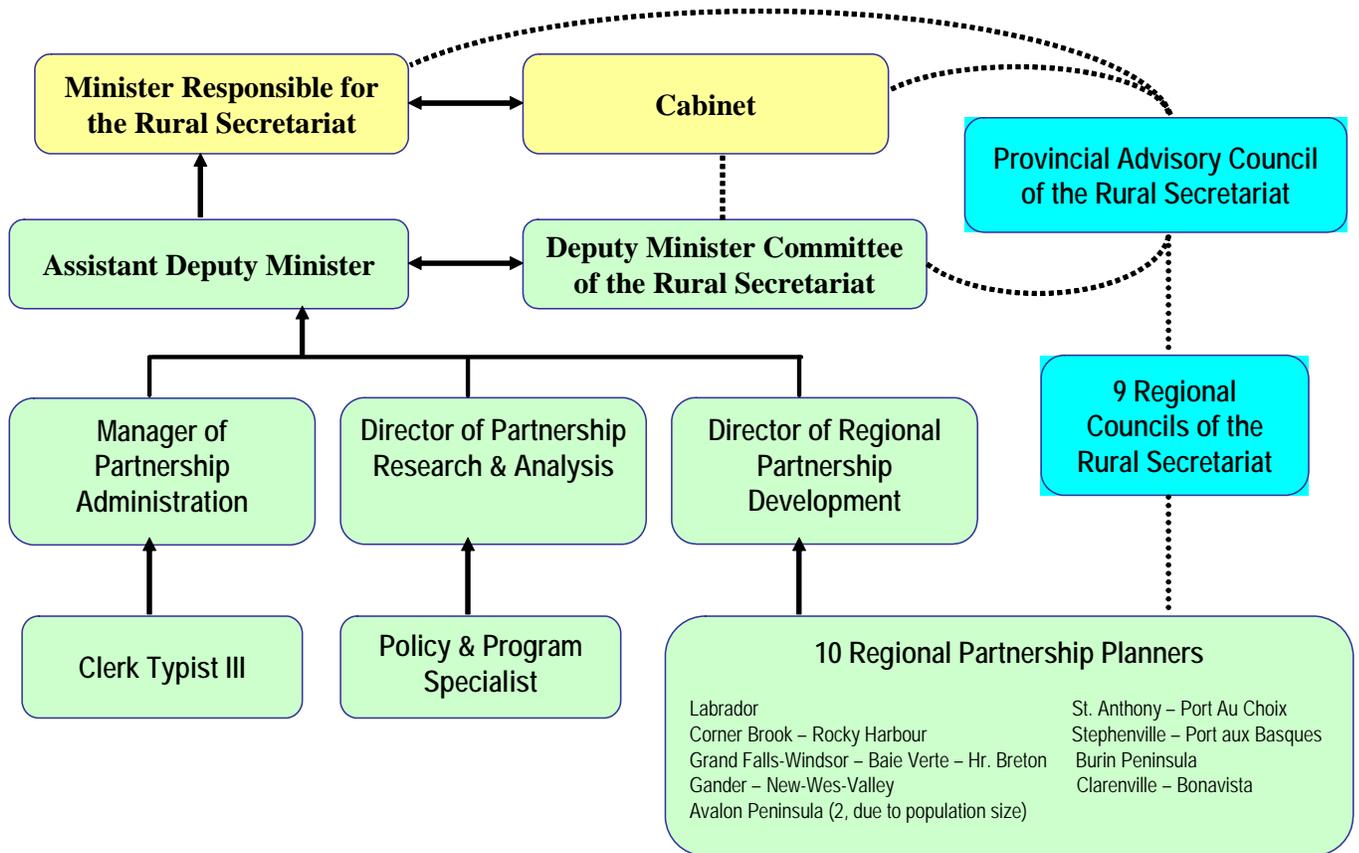
**2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability**

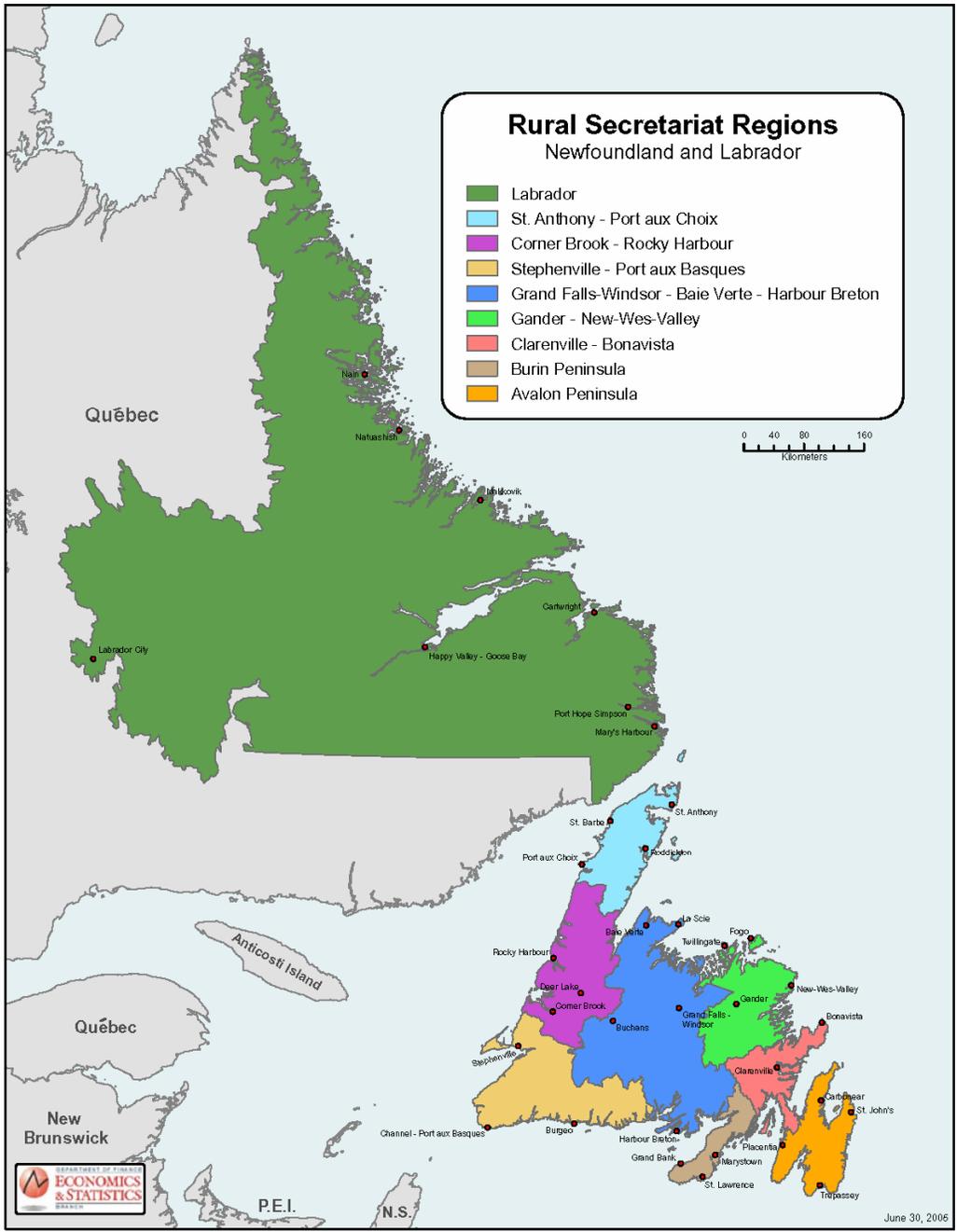
**Outcome Statement:** Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

**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.

# Rural Secretariat Structure





### **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.

### **Mandate of the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat**

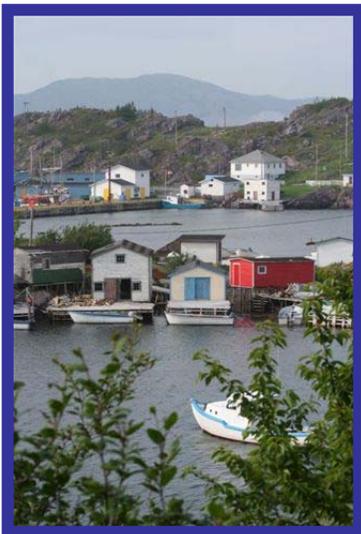
The Provincial Council's Mandate is to:

- Develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities facing the province.
- 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.
- Identify and advise government on policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the five year period.
- 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.
- Meet twice annually with the provincial Cabinet and deputy ministers to advance regional development priorities.
- 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:



View from Bare Mountain, Clarenville  
Photo compliments of Paul Tilley



Southwest Arm  
Photo compliments of Ed Vincent



*Rural Secretariat*

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