

St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority

Annual Performance Report 2025-2026



Chairperson's Message

Honourable Pleaman Forsey
Minister of Forestry, Agriculture and Lands
Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Forsey:

In accordance with the provisions of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for category three public bodies, I am pleased to submit the Annual Performance Report for the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority (the Authority) for the period of April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026.

The Authority was successful in fulfilling its objective for the reporting period. The Authority was also successful in supporting Government's commitment to enhanced utilization, sustainability and public awareness of the forestry, agriculture and agrifoods sectors.

My signature below is on behalf of the Authority and indicative of the Authority's accountability for the results reported on its objective for 2025-2026.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Coolene Coleman'.

Coolene Coleman
Chairperson

Table of Contents

Overview	1
Mandate	1
Vision	2
Primary Clients	2
Contact Information	2
Highlights and Partnerships	2
Report on Performance	3
Issue: Sustainable Agricultural Development in the St. John's Urban Region ADA	3
Objective 2025-2026	3
Indicators	3
Opportunities and Challenges	4
Financial Information	5

Overview

The St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority was created to review applications regarding development within the St. John's Urban Region Agricultural Development Area (ADA) as per the **St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area Regulations** (the Regulations) under the **Lands Act** (the Act).

Section 3 of the Regulations under the Act provides for the appointment of the Authority. The Authority is appointed by the Minister of the Department of Forestry, Agriculture and Lands (FAL) and must have at least five people, including a Chairperson and a Secretary. During the reporting period, the Authority was made up of members from FAL, as well as members from other resource departments as per the Regulations. Appointments are made using a merit-based process; however, gender balance is considered during the appointment process and efforts are made to ensure the Authority is representative of the population it serves.

As of March 31, 2026, the membership of the Authority consisted of the following:

Name	Position	Department
Coolene Coleman	Chairperson	Forestry, Agriculture and Lands
Colin Leslie	Secretary	Forestry, Agriculture and Lands
Megan Nichols	Member	Forestry, Agriculture and Lands
Jane White	Member	Forestry, Agriculture and Lands
Karen Tucker	Member	Government Services
Assigned Member	Member	Municipal and Community Affairs

All members are employees of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and receive no additional remuneration for their involvement with the Authority. There is no budget allocation specific to the duties of the Authority.

The Authority received extensive operational support from FAL. Employees of FAL performed day-to-day administrative functions and consulted other staff regarding applications where necessary. Budgetary support for operations was also provided through FAL.

Mandate

The Authority has a mandate to:

- a) Review applications to carry out development on land within the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area.
- b) Inform municipalities of decisions made.
- c) Monitor activities within the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area.
- d) Ensure awareness of the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area and associated Regulations.

For more detail on the Regulations, please refer to the House of Assembly website at: <http://assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/regulations/rc961079.htm>.

Vision

Through assessment of applications for development activities on land in the St. John's Urban Region ADA, the Authority contributes to the vision of FAL, that of sustainable renewable resources that are responsibly developed for the social, cultural, ecological and economic well-being of the province.

Primary Clients

The clients of the Authority are individuals or organizations who apply through the municipal councils of the City of St. John's; Town of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's; Town of Pouch Cove; Town of Flatrock; Town of Torbay; Town of Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove; and the Town of Conception Bay South to carry out development on land in the St. John's Urban Region ADA.

Contact Information

Coolene Coleman
Chairperson
St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority
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Highlights and Partnerships

The Authority works in partnership with the municipalities located within the St. John's Urban Region ADA to review applications for land development. The partnership between the Authority and municipalities led to all applications being processed and a decision rendered to the applicant.

in a timely manner, which was within 30 days of applications being received. While the Authority assesses the applications, municipalities are responsible for informing applicants of the decision, including an explanation of the Authority's decision pursuant to the Regulations.

Report on Performance

The Authority contributes to the 2025-2026 goals and objectives of FAL regarding natural resource development. Specifically, the Authority supports the Provincial Government's commitment to enhanced utilization, sustainability and public awareness of the agriculture and agrifoods sectors. During 2025-2026, this was accomplished through the protection of agricultural land and farm activities within the St. John's Urban Region ADA in the review of applications for development activities and by regulating development to ensure consistency with agricultural purposes.

The objective and indicators below are derived from the 2023-2026 Activity Plan of the Authority. This is the third and final year of the 2023-2026 reporting period. As the focus of Authority will remain the same for the entire plan, the Authority will report on the same objective and indicators in all three years of the planning period. For more details, please refer to the plan here: <https://www.assembly.nl.ca/business/electronicdocuments/SJLDAAActivityPlan2023-2026.pdf>

Issue: Sustainable Agricultural Development in the St. John's Urban Region ADA

Objective 2025-2026

By March 31, 2026, the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority will have worked to ensure development activities in the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area are compliant with the Act and Regulations, thus supporting ongoing, sustainable agricultural development in the area.

Indicators

- **Reviewed all applications and rendered decisions.**

The Authority received 32 applications during 2025-2026. The Authority implemented a process whereby applications were circulated and reviewed by members via email on 32 occasions to review all 32 applications received for agricultural and non-agricultural development within the boundaries of the St. John's Urban Region ADA. All applications were reviewed by a quorum of the Authority. Of the 32 eligible applications that were reviewed by the Authority in 2025-2026, 21 were approved, eight were refused, and three held pending further information. Of these 32

applications, 12 were applications for land severance or subdivision and dwellings; nine were for existing residential developments (e.g., driveway, shed or garage); five were for greenhouses or related agricultural activities; four were for commercial operations; and two were for rezoning or non-conforming uses.

Within 30 days of all decisions rendered in 2025-2026, the Secretary forwarded the decisions of the Authority to the applicable municipalities or sent notification that more time would be required due to the nature of the application. Municipalities are responsible for informing applicants of the decision, including an explanation of the Authority's decision pursuant to the Regulations. All applications were processed within 30 days of being received.

- **Maintained records of decisions.**

In 2025-2026, the Secretary of the Authority maintained and updated a registry of all applications, including decisions.

- **Monitored development activities for compliance with Regulations.**

Staff members of the Authority regularly performed field work within the St. John's Urban Region ADA and actively monitored development activity to ensure compliance with respect to the Regulations during these routine field visits. During the 2025-2026 development season, ten monitoring inspections were completed, which determined that all ongoing development activities were compliant with the Regulations at that time. Monitoring of the St. John's Urban Region ADA includes investigating public complaints and doing routine drive-throughs to ensure there is no unauthorized development taking place.

Opportunities and Challenges

There are several opportunities to collaborate with municipalities to strengthen awareness and promote agricultural development within their jurisdictions, particularly among the next generation of farmers. Ongoing engagement with municipalities regarding proposed developments in the St. John's Urban Region Agricultural Development Area (ADA), along with support from FAL to safeguard arable land, helps reinforce awareness and demonstrates a continued commitment to future agricultural growth.

A large share of the land within the St. John's Urban Region ADA is under private ownership. Although some of this land may have been used for agriculture in the past, current owners may lack either the capacity or interest to return it to agricultural production, posing a challenge for future development of farmland.

Financial Information

Audited financial statements are not required as the Authority is budgeted through FAL. There are no per diems, travel or other costs associated with the administration of the Authority.