



Provincial Council
of the
Rural Secretariat
Executive Council



*Activity Plan
2008~11*

Message from the Chair

As Acting Chair of the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat and in accordance with Government's commitment to accountability, I hereby submit the Council's 2008-2011 Activity Plan. My signature below is on behalf of the entire Council and is indicative of our accountability for the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of the goals and objectives contained in the plan, pursuant to section 7(4) of the Transparency and Accountability Act.

The Provincial Council is a relatively new entity within the provincial government, having met for the first time in November 2006. It is comprised of 20 individuals, acting as volunteers, who are committed to exploring long-term and sustainable solutions to the challenges facing the various regions and rural areas of the province.

The Council met on four occasions during 2007-08 (Corner Brook, Portugal Cove, Gander and St. John's) to better understand its role, develop a common understanding of the tasks it is mandated to address, identify common regional and rural priorities in the context of the work of the nine Regional Councils of the Rural Secretariat, and develop a workplan for 2008-2011.

Building on the work of the Regional Councils, the Provincial Council has identified regionalism and partnership development as a common regional and rural priority, and wishes to engage with government on this issue in 2008-09. It is expected that this issue will lead to further engagement with government on related regional and rural issues in future years. The Provincial Council will also seek to strengthen links between Regional Councils and the provincial government by seeking to develop a protocol by which regional priorities can be brought to government in a timely manner.

The Council is prepared to share our advice with Cabinet to inform policy development and decision making processes to maximize regional and rural development opportunities.

Sincerely,



Minister Trevor Taylor
Acting Chair
Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat

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1.0 Provincial Council Overview

The Provincial Council is comprised of 20 members, including nine Regional Council representatives, ten at-large representatives and an independent chair. Among current members, ten are female and eight are male (with two vacancies). Members of the Council have a variety of backgrounds and bring a wide range of perspectives to the discussion.

The Council has representation from each of the nine regions of the Rural Secretariat. Regions have also designated an alternate in the event that the regional representative cannot attend a meeting. The Council also has representatives from key interest groups.

The Council does not have a budget allocation. Meetings of the Council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Rural Secretariat.

Chair of the Provincial Council: Sheila Kelly-Blackmore
Sandy Cove

Region	Representative	Alternate
Avalon Peninsula	Mr. Kerry Murray Conception Bay South	Ms. Maureen Sullivan Calvert
Burin Peninsula	Ms. Pamela Ghent Harbour Mille	vacant
Clarenville-Bonavista	Mr. Mervin Wiseman North Harbour – Placentia Bay	Ms. Marilyn Coles-Hayley Elliston
Gander – New-Wes-Valley	Ms. Gail Hoyles Gander	Mr. Derm Flynn Appleton
Grand Falls-Windsor, Baie Verte, Harbour Breton	Ms. Debbie Armstrong Grand Falls-Windsor	Mr. David Hyashida King’s Point
Stephenville – Port Aux Basques	Ms. Michelle Skinner St. George’s	Mr. Kelly Thompkins Codroy Valley
Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour	Ms. Colleen Kennedy Rocky Harbour	Mr. Don Downer Corner Brook
St. Anthony – Port au Choix	Mr. Ted Lewis Croque	Ms. Gloria Toope Plum Point
Labrador	Mr. James Farrell Wabush	Ms. Lori O’Brien L’Anse au Loup

(membership continued on next page)

Provincial Council At Large Representation:

Reg Anstey (St. John's) President of the Federation of Labour	Councillor Keith Keating (Marystown) Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador
Donna Butt (Trinity) Rising Tide Theatre	Penelope Rowe (St. John's) Executive Director Community Services Council
Al Goss (St. John's) Chair of the Board of Governors College of the North Atlantic	Kara Snow (St. Anthony) Presently studying at CAN
	Mary Broderick (Baie Verte) Vice Chair Memorial University Board of Regents

For a current membership list, please visit our website at www.gov.nl.ca/rural

2.0 Mandate

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 the provincial 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 the provincial 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 provincial government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will affect provincial and regional sustainability.

3.0 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 Provincial 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 right/opportunity to express their own.
Learning Culture	Each individual is recognized and valued for the skills that they bring and is encouraged to continue to learn.
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.

4.0 Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Provincial Council include the Rural Secretariat, the Regional Councils of the Rural Secretariat, Cabinet and Deputy Ministers.

The Council also engages with officials of departments and agencies of the provincial government as well as individuals, groups and organizations in the province.

5.0 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 Provincial Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat. Through its work and in the context of the work of the Regional Councils, 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.

6.0 Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the Council over the next two planning cycles. It represents the key longer-term result that the Council will be working towards as they move forward on the strategic directions of the provincial government. The statement also identifies the indicators that will assist both the Council and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

The mission statement of the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat is as follows:

By 2011, the Provincial Council will have reviewed the work of each Regional Council in order to have developed a common understanding of the province's economic, social, cultural and environmental realities, as well as regional commonalities and differences.

Measure Regional and rural issues identified in context of Regional Councils' work

Indicators Common regional and rural opportunities and challenges are identified

Regional and rural priorities are considered in the discussion of provincial priorities

Meetings are held with Cabinet and the Deputy Ministers' Committee on Regional Development to provide input and advice on regional and rural priorities

This mission statement is written for the next three fiscal years, however, the work of the Council is looking ahead 15 years. The Provincial Council is still a new entity, having met only five times since its inception. Advancing provincial and 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.

The Council meets with Cabinet and Deputy Ministers. This process provides the forum for citizens and Government to engage in discussions that will influence short-term and long-term policy directions. As this process matures, there is significant potential for all regions of the province.

7.0 Strategic Issues

In consideration of the Rural Secretariat's strategic directions, mandate and financial resources, the following issues have been identified as priorities for the next three years. The goals identified for each issue outline expected results at the end of the three year period and the objectives outline the annual focus. The identified measures and indicators will be used to monitor progress. Gender-based differences will be considered where applicable.

The Provincial Council is seeking to engage in dialogue with the provincial government on a range of common regional and rural priorities. These priorities will build on the work of Regional Councils; however, the Council may seek to engage other stakeholders and citizens in its work. The Council has developed a set of broad criteria to guide this process. These criteria include consideration of issues that promote wise and efficient use of public funds, promote increased quality of life and enhanced access to services; support regional sustainability, have both a short-term and long-term focus, have a pan-provincial focus; are horizontal (cross-cutting) in nature, and are not seen to be addressed through other mechanisms and processes.

7.1 Regionalism and Partnership Development

The Council wishes to engage with government on regionalism and partnership development as its focus for 2008-09. The Council feels that advancing this issue could have wide reaching benefits in all regions and rural areas of the province. For example, it could enable the sharing of human and financial resources to support regional sustainability, and it holds the potential to improve citizens' quality of life. The Councils wishes to initiate dialogue on the implications of both pursuing new regionalism and partnership models versus maintaining the status quo, and wishes to identify opportunities to advance a regionalism agenda building on natural connections that can be further nurtured. The Council also recognizes that there are regional differences that must be considered and that one model may not be suitable for all regions.

Goal: By 2011, the Provincial Council will have provided input and advice to the provincial government and worked with community stakeholders to advance regionalism and partnership development in the province.

Measures: Provision of input and advice to government
Dialogue with community stakeholders

Indicators:

- Position paper developed
- Meetings are held with government and community stakeholders to advance concepts of regionalism and partnership development
- Specific opportunities to advance regionalism and partnership development are identified

Objective: By March 31, 2009, the Provincial Council will have developed a position paper on the concept of regionalism and partnership development

Measure: Position paper developed

Indicators:

- Policies that advance or negatively impact regionalism and partnership development, or that need to be developed, are identified
- Information is requested from Regional Councils and other stakeholders
- Provincial departments and agencies are engaged
- Regionalism and partnership development statement is developed

Objective: By March 31, 2010, the Provincial Council will have engaged with government to advance a regionalism and partnership development agenda

Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Provincial Council will have worked with government and community stakeholders to identify specific regional and local opportunities to advance a regionalism and partnership development agenda

7.2 Focused dialogue with government, in the context of Regional Council work, on specific regional and rural policy and developmental priorities

The Provincial Council feels that its engagement with the provincial government with respect to regionalism and partnership development will result in more specific regional and rural issues to be identified. The Council is also cognizant that there are ongoing Regional Council discussions may result, over the next several months, in additional common regional and rural issues to be identified. The Council therefore believes that it is premature to determine specific priorities for focused engagement with government in 2009-10 and 2010-11. Rather, the Council wishes to further discuss specific potential issues in the context of its regionalism and partnership development work and the work of the Regional Councils, and to report on its findings at the end of 2008-09.

Goal: By 2011, the Provincial Council, in the context of a regionalism and partnership development agenda as well as Regional Council priorities, will have engaged with the provincial government to advance specific common regional and rural priorities.

Measures: Identification of common regional and rural policy and developmental issues
Provision of input and advice to government on regional and rural priorities

Indicators: Regional and rural priorities to advance regional sustainability are identified
Meetings are held with government, Regional Councils and community stakeholders to advance identified regional and rural priorities
Specific opportunities are identified to advance the implementation of identified regional and rural priorities

Objective: By March 31, 2009, the Provincial Council, in the context of a regionalism and partnership development agenda, will have worked with Regional Councils and government to identify specific common regional and rural priorities

Measure: Specific common regional and rural priorities are identified

Indicators:

- Common regional and rural policies and developmental issues that impact regional sustainability, or that may need to be developed, are identified
- Provincial departments and agencies are engaged
- Position papers are developed

Objective: By March 31, 2010, the Provincial Council will have commenced engagement with government on specific regional and rural priorities which are informed by its work on regionalism and partnership development

Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Provincial Council will have worked with government and community stakeholders to identify specific regional and local opportunities to advance common regional and rural priorities

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
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**

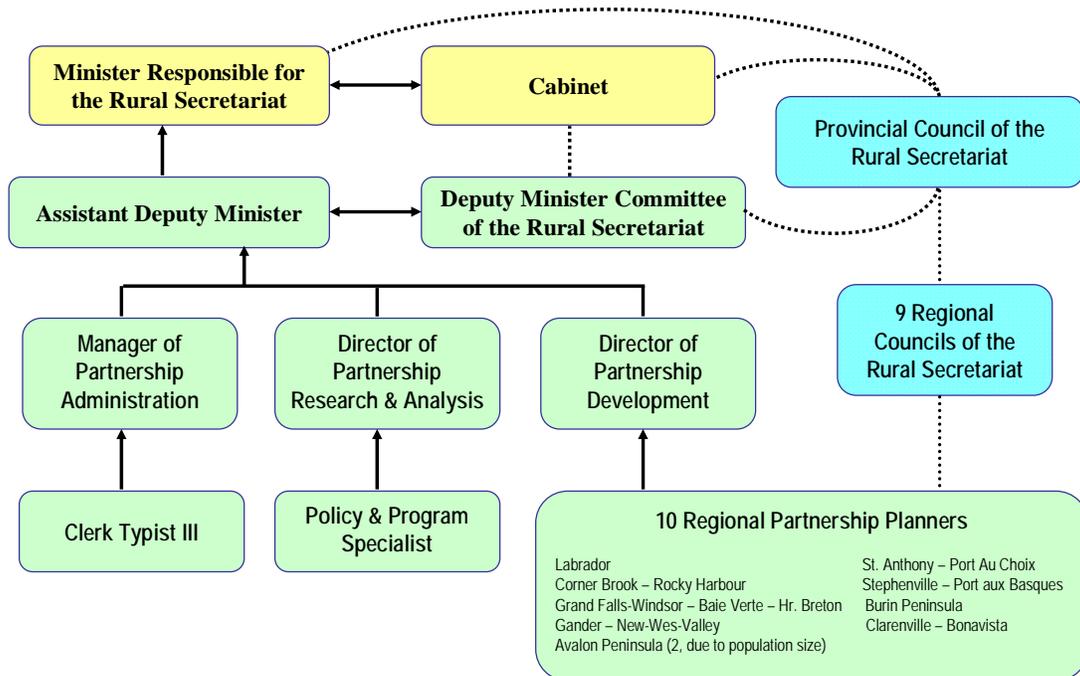
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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

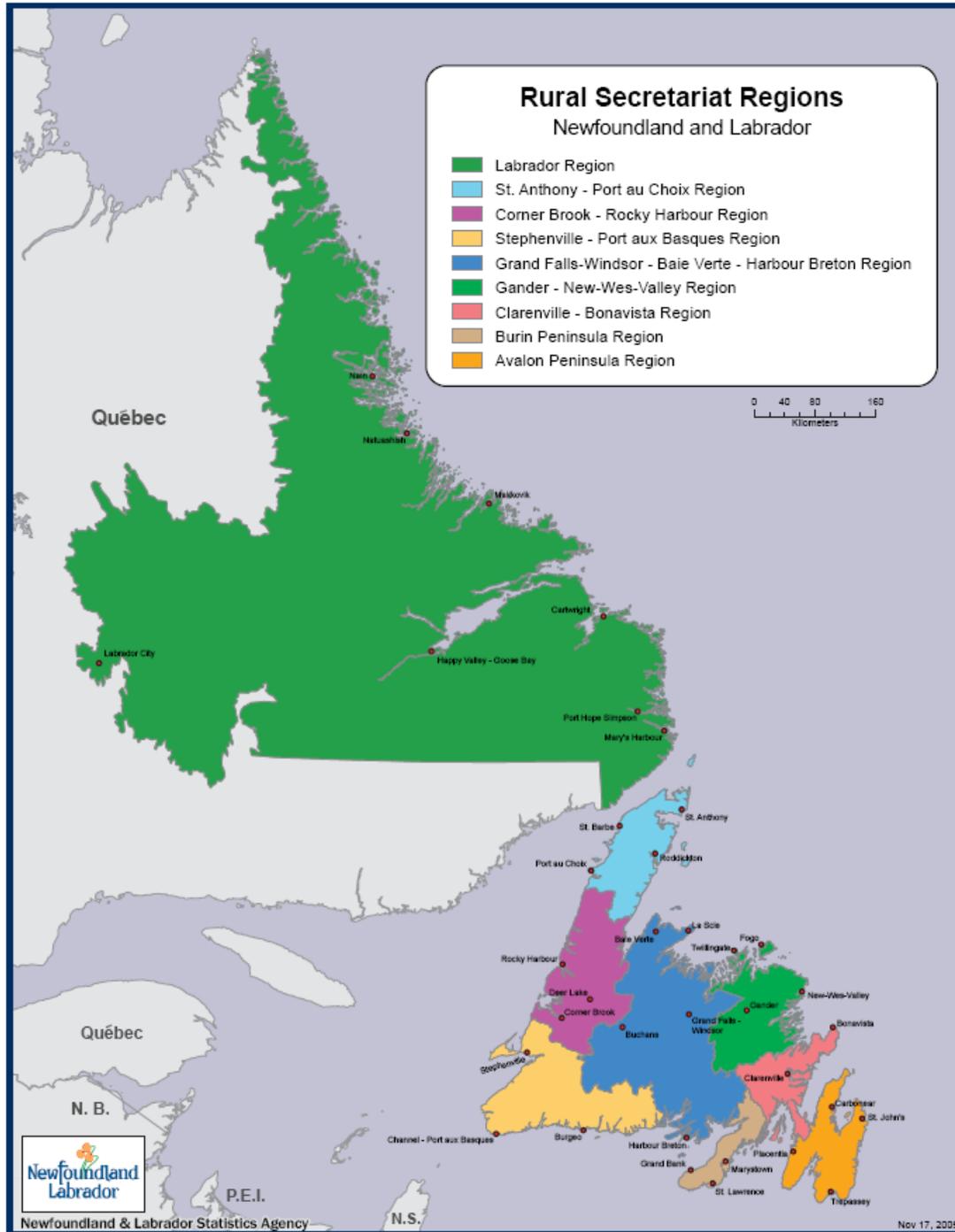
- Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy.

Components of Strategic Direction	Included in activity plan
Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy.	

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C



Rural Secretariat

The Rural Secretariat 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.

Regional Councils of the Rural Secretariat

The Regional Council Mandate is to:

- Develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities of a region.
- 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.
- Identify policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change.
- 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.
- Nominate an individual to represent the region on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat.

PHOTO CREDITS:



Cape Broyle
Photo Compliments of Irish Loop Dev Board



Nicholsville Bridge
Photo Compliments of Dr. Greg Wood



Frenchman's Cove Poppies
Photo Compliments of Irene Hurley



Burnside
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Trinity East
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Botwood
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The Northern Lights
Photo Compliments of Tourism, Culture & Recreation



Flower's Island Lighthouse
Photo Compliments of Nina Mitchelmore



Port aux Basques
Photo Compliments of Zone 10 REDB



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