



Clarenville-Bonavista
Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat
Executive Council
Activity Report 2010-11



Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council, I hereby submit the Activity Report for the 2010-11 fiscal year. The period of time covered by this report extends from April 1, 2010 through to March 31, 2011. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results reported.

During the past three years, the council focused on four of its commitments as contained in the 2008-11 Activity Plan. Throughout the process, the council continued to engage government and community stakeholders. Consequently, it was proven to be very busy and rewarding years with the council developing new understandings of the issues we hoped to address. In this effort, we have engaged government, academia and community stakeholders to assist us in formulating our perspectives and building our knowledge base as we seek to refine our policy advice.

In 2009, the council provided policy advice on agriculture and public services and programs impacting citizens and communities in the region. Additionally, the council provided advice on integrated land use planning which was informed by consolidated advice from the Provincial Council. The council hopes that this information will assist municipalities and development associations with improved regional planning information.

In 2010, the council provided advice on regional municipal collaboration and community-based leadership. In 2011, the council fulfilled its Activity Plan commitments by submitting its advice on human resources, employment and infrastructural issues impacting primary industries, as well as advice on the Community Schools Model. For the latter, the council hopes these policy recommendations will inform the Provincial Government's future decisions for the K-12 school system. Lastly, the council updated its Vision 2020 document and published a revised edition which reflects the changing social, economic, environmental and cultural changes in the region.

In closing, I, on behalf of the council, want to express our sincere thanks to the Provincial Government for its interest in our work and we look forward to continuing our collective efforts to support the sustainability of the Clarenville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat region.

Sincerely,



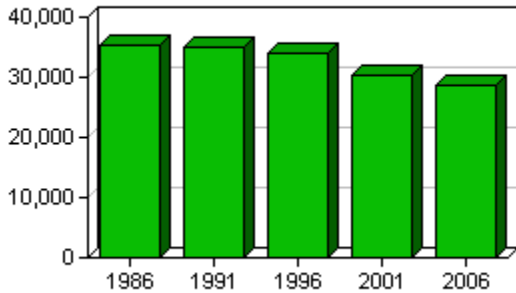
William (Bill) Abbott
Chair
Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

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1. Overview of the Region

Population



The 2006 Census population for Clarendville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region was 28,650. This represents a decline of 5.4% since 2001. Over the same period, the entire province experienced a population decline of 1.5% since 2001 (505,470 in 2006, down from 512,930).

The 2006 gross income for every man, woman, and child (gross personal income per capita) in Clarendville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region was \$20,600. For the province, gross personal income per capita was \$22,900. After tax personal income per capita, adjusted for inflation, was

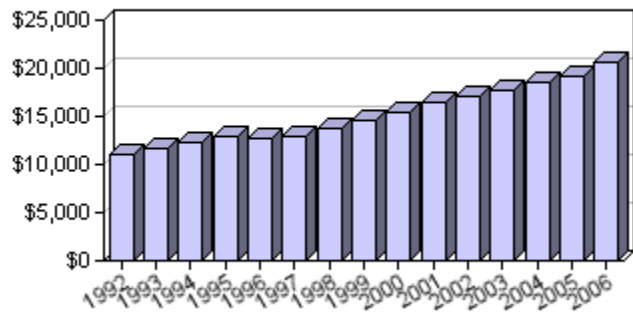
\$13,700 for Clarendville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region in 2006. For the province it was \$14,900.

Half of the couple families in Clarendville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region had incomes of more than \$48,900 in 2006. Half of the couple families in the province had incomes of more than \$56,500.

Half of the lone-parent families in Clarendville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region had incomes of less than \$23,900 in 2006. Half of the lone-parent families in the province had incomes of less than \$25,300.

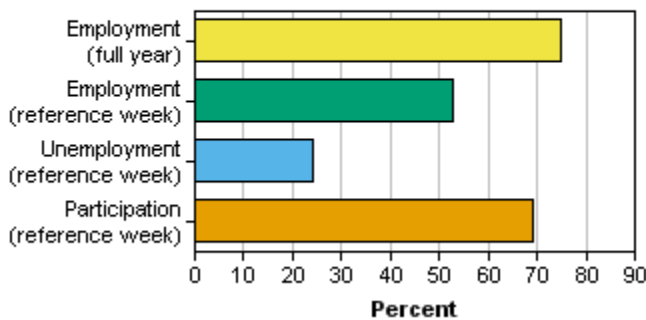
The 2006 self-reliance ratio for Clarendville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region was 71.1%. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance, Income Support Assistance, etc.

Personal Income Per Capita



The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2006 was 78.5%.

**Labour Market Rates Population 18 to 64
Census 2006**



According to the 2006 Census, in Clarendville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region 86.5% of homes were owned versus rented compared to 78.7% for the province and 68.4% for Canada.

The unemployment rate in May 2006 for people between 18 and 64 years of age was 24.1%. The provincial unemployment rate was 18.5%.

The employment rate for the entire year 2005 for those

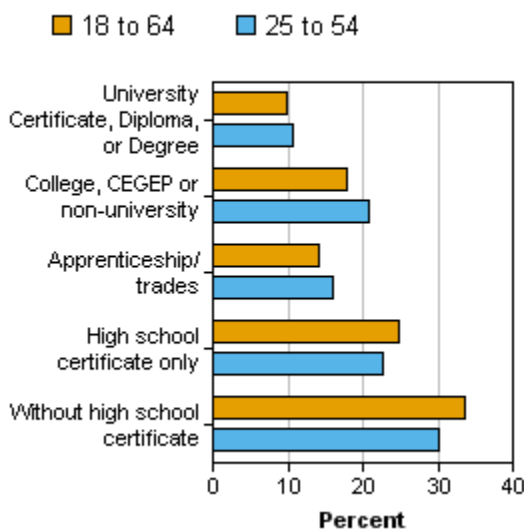
between 18 and 64 years of age was 74.8%. The provincial employment rate for the same period was 76.7%.

The number of individuals in Clarenville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region who received Income Support Assistance at some point in the year 2008 was 2,465. The 1991 figure was 5,770.

The total number of children ages 0 to 17 in Clarenville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region who were in families on Income Support Assistance in 2008 was 620. The figure for 1991 was 2,200.

Census 2006 reported 33.5% of people 18 to 64 years of age in Clarenville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region do not have a high school diploma compared to 25.1% of people in the entire province.

Highest Level of Education, Census 2006



In Clarenville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region about 8.0% of people aged 25 to 54 had a Bachelor's Degree or higher in 2006 compared to 15.1% in the province as a whole.

In Clarenville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region about 69.9% of people aged 25 to 54 had at least a High School diploma in 2006 compared to 78.0% in the province as a whole.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status.

In 2005, 62.1% of individuals in Clarenville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status from very good to excellent. The provincial number in 2005

was 64.5%. In 2005, for Canada, 60.2% of individuals age 12 and over rated their health status as very good to excellent.

Additional information, including gender-specific information and information for other levels of geography, can be found at www.communityaccounts.ca and www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural.

2. Regional Council Overview

Currently, the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council is comprised of 11 members; seven female and five male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including ten members from communities of less than 5,000 people. From 2008 to 2011, three members of the council resigned due to either work or personal commitments. The council met 19 times in the time period covered by this report; six of which were held in 2010-2011 and included at least one special pan-provincial Regional Council meeting. The council members also participated in public engagement processes pertaining to specific regional issues such as: integrated land use planning; regional governance; multi-service delivery of rural education; in addition to participating in the Discovery Regional Development Board's three annual Municipal Symposiums.

The council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Rural Secretariat.

The Rural Secretariat also funds a Regional Partnership Planner position in the region, who among other duties, act as an information resource for the council and facilitate the work of the council and its work plan. The planner for the Clarenville - Bonavista region is Colin Holloway. The nature of this position requires that he travel extensively throughout the region and the province. Mr. Holloway's office is located at the Bonavista campus of the College of the North Atlantic.

Regional Council members	Community
Bill Abbott (Chair)	Bonavista
Shelly Blackmore	Port Union
Lisa Browne	Clarenville
Marilyn Coles-Hayley	Elliston
Darryl Johnson	Port Union
Janet Fay Matthews	Arnold's Cove
Don Mifflin	Bonavista
Violet Parsons	Bloomfield
Barry Pearce	Port Rexton
Edith Samson	Port Union
Mervin Wiseman	North Harbour
**Maria Moran	St. Jones Within
**Leo Bonnell	Clarenville
**Paul Tilley	Clarenville

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

** Resigned

3. Mandate

The Regional Council's mandate is:

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

4. Lines of Business

The council supports the Rural Secretariat's four lines of business:

Citizen-based policy advice: The Rural Secretariat supports nine citizen-based Regional Councils, and one stakeholder-based Provincial Council, to develop policy and decision-making advice for submission to government. Typically, councils, with the support of Rural Secretariat staff, hold public engagement sessions involving citizens and/or stakeholder group representatives, and conduct community-based research activities, to inform the development of advice documents.

Collaboration: The Rural Secretariat understands that sustainability in rural Newfoundland and Labrador can be significantly advanced through more and better collaboration between and among rural stakeholders including governments. Sometimes the Rural Secretariat works to support existing rural collaborative processes such as partnerships. Other times they work to help convene new regional collaborative processes such as networks or alliances. The broad goal is to help build a strengthened 'culture of collaboration' in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

Research: The Rural Secretariat collaborates with provincial partners on a number of formal research endeavors that help to improve understanding of the challenges facing, and opportunities available to, rural regions of this province. The Rural Secretariat also works directly with regional partners and councils on a host of community-based research initiatives – small regional-level data-gathering efforts that give those involved the information and knowledge they need to effectively advise the Provincial Government on regional and rural policy issues.

Public dialogue and engagement: In addition to supporting councils to conduct public engagement efforts, the Rural Secretariat is also available to assist other Provincial Government departments to design and deliver their own public engagement initiatives. The Rural Secretariat also periodically convenes special deliberative dialogue initiatives on themes deemed to be of particular importance to the rural sustainability of this province, often in partnership with rural stakeholder groups and other government departments.

5. Values

The core values explain the character of the organization. These values are paramount to the mandate and activities of the Council and are as follows:

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.

6. Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Regional Council include the Rural Secretariat, the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat, and departments and agencies within the Provincial Government, among others.

The Council will also engage individuals, groups and organizations within the region as it carries out its work.

7. Vision

The Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat:

Sustainable regions with healthy, educated, prosperous people living in safe, inclusive communities.

Through its work (i.e., citizen engagement, community-based research and policy advice), the Council identified priorities that contribute to regional sustainability which considers economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

8. Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the council; to demonstrate the value of two-way communication between the Provincial Government and citizens. In most instances, through ongoing citizen engagement opportunities, policy advice is utilized as the main mechanism for communicating between citizens of the Clarenville-Bonavista region and the Provincial Government. The Mission represents the key four-year objective that the council worked towards in the 2007-11 planning cycle. This priority focus area supports the strategic directions of the Provincial Government (Appendix A). In particular, through two-way communication

between the Provincial Government, the Regional Council and citizens of the region, it is possible to develop stronger, more dynamic region and for improved understanding of and the response to significant long-term regional issues.

The mission statement of the Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council is as follows:

By 2011, the Council will have participated in an ongoing community engagement process that will demonstrate the value of two-way communication between the Provincial Government and citizens.

Measure: Participated in an ongoing community engagement process

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>A long-term vision of sustainability for the region will have been submitted to the Provincial Government and shared with citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council developed a revised Vision 2020 document which was submitted to the Provincial Government, shared widely with citizens via mail-outs, stakeholder meetings, and conference information packages and posted to the Rural Secretariat website. This document was originally published in 2007, reviewed by council in 2009-10, and re-published in 2011.
<p>Enhanced regional input will have been provided into policy development and decision-making processes of the Provincial Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Regional Council developed various policy advice documents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community-based Leadership and Collaborative Practices in Rural Newfoundland and Labrador; ➤ Labour Market and Infrastructure Issues in Primary Industries; and, ➤ Multi-service Delivery of Education in Rural Communities. ● Prior to 2008, these methods of providing regional input into policy advice to the Provincial Government were not in place. As a result, regional input into the Provincial Government’s decision-making processes has been greatly enhanced.
<p>Opportunities and mechanisms will have been provided to enhance two-way communication between the Provincial Government and citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The council, in its preparation of various policy advice documents, conducted research throughout the region and organized public engagement meetings with community-based organizations, local federation and Provincial Government representatives as well as municipalities and industry stakeholders. Following the submission of

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>these policy advice documents, council received response letters from respective government departments relating to the specific policy advice submissions. Consequently, the council engaged government departmental officials to discuss specific policy recommendations relating to advice on the region (ex., Agriculture, Integrated Land Use Planning, and the Community Schools Model).</p>
<p>Community engagement sessions will have been conducted at the regional level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2011, the Regional Council conducted citizen engagement sessions throughout the region and documented input from stakeholders in its three policy advice submissions to the Provincial Government, in addition to seeking advice on its Vision 2020 documents. Examples include: ● In 2007-2008, council met with municipal councils in Bonavista, Elliston, Arnold’s Cove, and Norman’s Cove-Long Cove. ● In 2008 and 2010, council organized multi-stakeholder engagement sessions in Arnold’s Cove, Clarenville, Port Rexton and Bonvista to discuss its Vision 2020 document. ● Finally, council, in 2010-2011, through two multi-disciplinary advisory committees, engaged industry stakeholders and community-based organizations as it prepared its policy advice on integrated land use, rural education, primary industries and collaborative leadership practices in rural regions.
<p>Citizens and stakeholders will have been informed about the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of regional sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Regional Council, provided information on the social, cultural, environmental and economic status of the region through formal presentations to community-based organizations, advisory groups and officials working in government departments at the regional level. Similarly, this information was contained in the two Regional Council 2020 Vision documents (2007 and 2011).

Discussion of Results: The Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council feels these accomplishments are extensive and support our original commitments proposed in 2008. The council is gratified with its performance on the measures and indicators stated above.

9. Report on Performance

In its 2008-11 Activity Plan the council identified four goals. The activities and performance of the council with respect to each of the goals as outlined below, is in support of the Provincial Government's strategic directions for the Rural Secretariat (**Appendix A**). In particular, the council's performance allowed for the development of new partnerships with various stakeholders at the regional level, and provided a new regional forum to discuss citizens' perspectives on regional and rural sustainability. As the council hosted public engagement meetings throughout the region, various stakeholders including individuals, municipal and community leaders, and government officials were engaged on issues of rural importance. The dialogue and information gathered during the public engagement processes have been captured in many of the policy advice documents that the council has prepared for the Provincial Government.

9.1 Issue 1: Partnerships and Community Development – Regional Governance

Starting in 2008, the council began studying the concept of regional governance as it pertained to partnership and community development. Council identified four areas necessary to develop a regional governance model for the Clarenville-Bonavista region: community leadership; regional collaboration; models of regional governance; and the importance of understanding demographic trends within rural regions and communities.

In 2009-10, the council continued to explore regional collaboration and how it is influenced by community-based leadership. In November 2009, new partnerships were developed with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, the Leslie Harris Centre at Memorial University and the Discovery Regional Development Board (DRDB). The year culminated with the council engaging municipal leaders during the March 2010 Regional Municipal Symposium which focused on three themes: regional planning; community collaboration; and shared service delivery modelling. (Please see the council's 2010-11 accomplishments below).

As a result of various public engagements and the council's study of collaborative efforts in the region, it realized that policy advice must be broader than regional governance. Consequently, the council re-focused its work, broadening its understanding of regionalism, regional collaboration and community-based leadership; all which, council believes are impacted by regional governance.

Goal: By March 31, 2011, the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council will have developed a position paper on regional governance options that identifies ways to meet the sustainability needs of the Clarenville-Bonavista region.

Measure: Concept paper developed

Indicator 1: Regional Governance defined

In 2008-09, the council undertook a range of consultations and related activities to better understand local community leadership practices, issues and challenges. The council defines community engagement as a process of engaging relevant stakeholders in issues that either directly or indirectly impact them. These stakeholders may be individuals, representatives from grass-roots groups or formal organizations or government departments and agencies.

The council consulted with municipalities, Regional Economic Development Boards (REDBs), regional tourism groups, voluntary organizations and Provincial Government entities (e.g., regional waste management authority). The council compiled an inventory of baseline information and findings from its consultation work and decided that its first area of focus should not pertain solely to defining Regional Governance. It should also relate to documenting best practices in community-based leadership. A third area of focus pertained to the council seeking information on the differences between regional governance, regionalism and regionalization.

The council also felt that in order to be reflective of what is happening externally, new partnerships with research institutions and economic development organizations would be necessary. By December 2009, the council explored a partnership with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, Memorial University of Newfoundland and the Discovery Regional Development Board to co-sponsor a Municipal Symposium. The three main themes for the Symposium were regionalism, community-based leadership and regional collaboration.

In March 2010, the council continued its partnership with the Discovery Regional Development Board and co-hosted the second annual regional Municipal Symposium. During the day and half session, the dialogue focused on regional governance and regional collaboration. The 43 municipal leaders, who participated, discussed potential opportunities for shared service arrangements including waste management, fire protection, affordable housing and integrated community sustainability planning.

By November 30, 2010, council had defined Regional Governance and presented its findings in the policy advice document, *“Community-based Leadership and Collaborative Practices in Rural Newfoundland and Labrador”*.

Indicator 2: Research conducted to describe existing regional governance structures

In 2008-2009, the council analyzed how it would complete a jurisdictional review of regional governance models provincially, nationally and internationally. The council aimed to attract researchers from Memorial University who have conducted regional, provincial and national research on regional governance, collaborative leadership and partnership development. The council, in partnership, with the Leslie Harris Centre at Memorial University, engaged experts and academics to learn about what was happening in other jurisdictions. Regional governance models in Europe and some Maritime Provinces were also a part of the council’s study.

The council has learned that there are several layers of complexity to consider, including the work of Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, to promote regionalization. It felt that it would benefit from engaging academic researchers to complement their own work, specifically to fill information gaps they were unable to complete relating to this indicator. To accomplish this, the council organized a session on regionalization and regional governance with presenters from Memorial University’s Departments of Geography and Political Science (known as Knowledge Mobilization). Topics covered included:

- ✚ Regional governance approaches used in other jurisdictions (British Columbia, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia);
- ✚ Criteria that can be used to better define regions such as socio-economic conditions, transportation, and geographic dispersion of employment; and
- ✚ The history of regionalization, specifically what motivates regionalization and how lessons learned from other jurisdictions can help inform the development of regional governance models.

In total, 38 representatives including municipal leaders and individuals from voluntary organizations in the region participated in the Memorial University citizen engagement process. For more information, a copy of the session report is available through the Harris Centre's website.

The council also reviewed the status of municipal plans, historical municipal electoral data and infrastructural information (as it relates to shared services within municipalities). Additionally, the council consulted with local organizations in the Clarenville – Bonavista region with a focus to gain input on thoughts and perspectives on regional governance. **(See Indicator 1).**

Similarly, the council studied and evaluated the work of a Memorial University researcher, Dr. Alvin Simms, on *Managing Functional Regions*. In addition, they reviewed other researchers' (i.e. Dr. Kelly Vodden) work on amalgamation and regional governance in economic development activities. Based upon this review, the council broadened its work to include regionalism and regional collaboration.

The council re-engaged Memorial University, Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the Department of Municipal Affairs, municipal leaders and several REDBs, on the themes of regional collaboration and shared service delivery modeling in rural regions.

After discussing its findings, council was confident it had completed a jurisdictional review of existing research into regional governance.

Indicator 3: Status of community leadership profiled

The council was interested in raising its understanding of the level of leadership existing in rural communities. To begin its analysis, the council studied and evaluated the Burin Regional Council's policy advice document on regionalism, as well as a similar report from the Provincial Council for the Rural Secretariat. The council's evaluation was based upon its knowledge of existing regional governance models internal and external to the Clarenville-Bonavista region **(see Indicator 2 on research)**. The council also considered other models that were presented to them during the knowledge mobilization session, held in Clarenville in October 2008. Based upon its study, the council provided feedback to the Provincial Council. This feedback has been included in the Provincial Council's policy advice to the Provincial Government (See Indicator 6 and 7 below).

Examples of collaboration in the Clarenville-Bonavista region include efforts to promote regional trail development, waste management, increase tourism opportunities, provide enhanced municipal services, and to implement new community leadership models for unincorporated communities. The council also developed a template to assist in the compilation of various leadership characteristics essential to effecting collaborations. Based upon the examples studied above, the council was able to evaluate which core leadership skills were essential in achieving success for the communities involved in the collaboration and to promote successful regional governance opportunities. The council agrees that communities which share functionality (See Dr. Alvin Simms work as referenced above) are more likely to collaborate effectively.

By March 31 2010, the council had profiled more than 10 examples of collaborative efforts within the region. These examples have been documented in a draft policy advice paper entitled; *"Community-based Leadership and Collaborative Practices in Rural Newfoundland Labrador"*.

Indicator 4: Opportunities identified to improve regional governance

During the period covered by this report, council reviewed its research with an aim of identifying possible ways to improve regional governance in the region. Council discovered that regional governance is a complex issue; it

requires legislative change and greater collaborative effort between municipalities and citizens. Because of this complexity, council feels it was not in a position to recommend any specific methods to improve regional governance at this time.

Indicator 5: Possible regional governance options and models are identified

On March 31, 2010, the council appointed a working group to help further define community leadership and its relationship to community collaboration and regional governance. The working group reviewed the research reports on this topic, including the results of the 2008 Harris Centre Knowledge Mobilization Session Report and the discussion documents on community-based leadership and collaborative practices in the Clarenville-Bonavista region. To support their work, the council developed a Working Paper entitled; “Community-based leadership and collaborative practices in rural Newfoundland and Labrador”. This paper identified possible opportunities for increased collaboration amongst rural communities in addition to potential models which would require additional study before they could be implemented.

Indicator 6: Options presented to communities, the Provincial Government and others.

In December 2010, the Council distributed the policy advice document to all 22 incorporated Municipal Councils within the Clarenville-Bonavista region. It was also formally submitted to the Provincial Government at that time (see notes below). Finally, the document has been distributed to the Federal Rural and Cooperative Secretariat, as well as Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador and Memorial University of Newfoundland.

2010-11 Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council will have presented a concept paper on regional governance options to relevant partners.

Measure: A concept on regional governance options presented to relevant partners.

Indicators	Accomplishments 2010-11
Concept paper is developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On November 30, 2010 the policy advice document entitled, “Community-based Leadership and Collaborative Practices in Rural Newfoundland and Labrador” was formally submitted to the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat

Discussion of Results: The Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council feels these accomplishments are extensive and supports our original commitments proposed in 2008. The Regional Council is pleased with its performance on the measures and indicators stated above and it will continue to advance its efforts in support of regional governance opportunities in the years ahead.

9.2 Issue 2: Multi-service delivery of rural education

In 2008-09, the council commenced its public engagement and research into the concept of *multi-service delivery of rural education* as proposed in its 2008-2011 Activity Plan. Achieving endorsement for a new approach to rural service delivery is only one step in a very long process. Departmental representatives are looking at best practices in the development of strategies and processes related to implementing a successful

Community School Model. The Community School Model promotes the utilization of regional schools as hubs for service delivery in rural communities.

To advance its understanding, the Regional Council explored other Canadian provinces. Specifically, council has learned that New Brunswick has adopted the Community School Model and its Department of Education and Early Childhood Development aims to designate 75 schools by 2012. Saskatchewan has been working in Community Schools for more than 30 years and British Columbia has been advancing a related school and community integration model, locally referred to as the Neighbourhood Learning Centres Pilot.

In January 2009, because of a strong focus on this objective, the council submitted a draft research document to government departments aiming to further its dialogue and engagement opportunities. A copy of the research document was also shared with regional health and education boards. Following the submission of the draft report, the Rural Secretariat's provincial office staff assisted the Regional Council in its request to engage government departments. Representatives from six government departments met and expressed interest in the Community Schools concept. Correspondence received from departmental executives provided support for the broad principles as proposed by the draft policy advice document.

In 2010-11, the council reviewed its commitments to advance policy advice to the Provincial Government on Multi-service Delivery of Rural Education. The council re-engaged the Eastern School Board and the Eastern Health Authority with an interest in advancing new information related to the Community Schools Model. New mechanisms for conducting primary research (surveys) were developed and administered. The results of council's work over the three year period were compiled and reported in its March, 2011 policy advice document.

Goal: By March 31, 2011, the Clarendville-Bonavista Regional Council will have developed a position paper which explores options for multi-service delivery of rural education.

Measure: Position paper developed

Indicator 1: Primary and secondary research completed

Commencing in 2008, the council began its secondary research efforts through internet searches and a review of existing school board and Department of Education policies and guidelines. Following this review, council began its primary research efforts (i.e. surveying, questioning and exploring ideas and concepts) by consulting with officials from the Eastern and Central School Boards, the Eastern Regional Integrated Health Authority, in addition to school administrators, and two other Regional Councils on the issue of multi-service delivery of rural education. As well, in the same year, two consultations were held with officials at Memorial University's Faculty of Education, as well as a session was held with officials representing the Departments of Education, Tourism, Culture & Recreation, Health & Community Services, Human Resources, Labour & Employment, and Justice. The information obtained by these consultations assisted the council in identifying additional sources of secondary research information and helped build its understanding of the issue.

The council reviewed its secondary research on community school processes throughout the world. The research provided numerous examples including international organizations (United Nations World Health Organization), academic institutions, other Provincial Government strategies, policy documents and legislation

(e.g., New Brunswick, British Columbia and Saskatchewan), provincial community-based organizations (e.g., Community Education Network of Southwest Newfoundland).

In May 2008, in an effort to continue with the secondary research agenda (i.e. identify other information sources), the council participated in Memorial University's Symposium on Education. The symposium brought together researchers and educators from schools, schools boards, the Department of Education and the Faculty of Education to discuss the past, present and future of rural education, and what collective steps need to be taken to address the anticipated needs of students and the community. Information provided by presenters at the symposium further enhanced council's secondary research efforts.

The council had learned, through its internet research, that there are examples demonstrating new methods of rural education delivery elsewhere in Canada and the United States. Consequently, the council was again represented by the Regional Partnership Planner at the 2008 Community Education Conference in Saskatchewan. Representatives, including educators, school-based professionals, researchers and policy analysts from Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and New Brunswick, were asked to focus on best practices and implementation strategies for community schools (also referred to multi-service delivery of rural education) and community education. Information materials provided at the conference further informed the council's primary and secondary research efforts.

Finally, to further its primary research and in an effort to understand to what extent the Community Schools Model is being implemented, the council administered surveys to 15 K-12 schools within the Clarendville - Bonavista region and 20 K-12 schools in the Central Nova School District. The results of the survey were compiled and reported as part of council's policy advice document to the Provincial Government.

Indicator 2: Roundtable discussions between Council and community completed

The council defines public engagement as focused dialogue with individuals and organizations that are directly or indirectly impacted by a topic. In some instances, this deliberative dialogue process will be with community-based groups, in other cases, it will be with formal organizations and government departments or agencies.

Commencing in 2008, the council initiated a public engagement process in the region. Through the planner, facilitated meetings were held with 27 school administrators, one school council, and officials from the Eastern School Board.

In December 2009, through the regional planner, the council engaged ten senior officials representing a joint management committee of the Eastern School Board and the Eastern Health Authority. Both agencies endorsed the community schools concept and agreed to participate in a provincial community schools forum to discuss implementation factors for urban and rural communities. (See also Indicator 1 above).

The council also found opportunities to raise awareness around the Community School Model at other regional initiatives. For example, during roundtable discussions as part of the community-based research feasibility study of the Early Childhood Capacity Initiative for the Clarendville-Arnold's Cove sub-region, participants referenced the community schools model as a mechanism for addressing space issues and effectively integrating pre-school children into the K-12 system. Similarly, as the council conducted public engagement forums in Bonavista and Bloomfield on its Vision 2020 document (See Goal 4 below), the community school concept was raised as an example of the policy advice it provides to the Provincial Government. During these dialogues, participants

endorsed the need to make schools more accessible in rural communities by better integrating public services. This ideology is core to the community schools concept.

Indicator 3: Position paper developed

As a result of their research, the council has concluded that there is broad support for a multi-service delivery model utilizing schools as hubs in rural communities. There were a variety of pilots and approaches, such as Neighbourhood Learning Centres in British Columbia and “communities in schools” in Newfoundland and Labrador, reviewed to help expand the council’s research and gain a comprehensive understanding. The administration of surveys to various K-12 schools in Eastern and Central School Districts also added to the primary research process.

Through council’s consideration of legislation (e.g., the *Schools Act*) and current board policies (e.g., lockdown policies, use of schools by external groups and other departments for local service provision, and after-school busing arrangements), it learned that there were challenges associated with this approach.

In 2009, the council identified three pilot sites – Rushoon, Summerford, and Stephenville. This was based on a provincial scan and the schools located in these rural communities had taken steps to move towards a community schools model. The council felt it was best to build on early successes and where there is already community support for an integrated approach to service delivery.

Examples of best practices include some of the following:

- ✚ school administrator has to be on side;
- ✚ solutions have to be consistent with principles of life-long learning;
- ✚ responsive to needs of community, including community participation in decisions;
- ✚ provision of services to range of clients such as children/ students families; and
- ✚ coordination requires additional resources such as a Community School Coordinator for administrative items, community consultation, and to facilitate better working relationships amongst key partners.

By March 31, 2010, the council developed a draft document which identified an integrated service delivery model for rural regions in Newfoundland and Labrador. It submitted the document, as a draft, to the Departments of Rural Secretariat, Education, Health & Community Services and Human Resources, Labour & Employment, Tourism, Culture & Recreation, and Justice. This document included an overview of best practices as summarized above.

Indicator 4: Increased communication between council, community partners and the Provincial Government on opportunities for multi-service delivery in rural education.

Throughout the three-year reporting period, the council engaged various stakeholders in its efforts to conduct research, consult with stakeholders and report on its preliminary findings. (See previous Indicators above). As reported, council has held formal meetings with community partners (i.e. Eastern School Board, Eastern Health Authority, Other Regional Councils, and school Councils, etc.) and the Provincial Government on opportunities for multi-service delivery of rural education (also known as the Community Schools Model).

2010-11 Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council will have finalized a position paper on multi-service delivery of rural education for the Clarenville-Bonavista region.

Measure: Position paper on multi-service delivery of education for the Clarenville-Bonavista region finalized.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2010-11
Finalization of position paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On March 28, 2011 the policy advice document entitled, “A Community Schools Model for Rural Newfoundland and Labrador” was formally submitted to several Provincial Government departments including: Education, Human Resources, Labour & Employment, Health & Community Services, Child, Youth & Family Services, the Voluntary Non-profit Secretariat, Justice, and Tourism, Cultural & Recreation. A copy of this document was also shared with the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat.

Discussion of Results: The Regional Council feels these accomplishments are extensive and supports the commitments proposed in 2008. The Regional Council is pleased with its performance on the measures and indicators stated above and in the future, it will work with the Provincial Rural Secretariat Office to advance community engagement processes on this Goal.

9.3 Issue 3: Employment and Human Resource Development

The Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat region is changing as a result of its diverse economy and investments in key primary industry sectors. The growth of these industries has created new challenges in enhancing and maintaining necessary infrastructure, as well as recruiting and retaining skilled labour. The council recognizes that regional sustainability is closely linked to a number of factors: aging population; out-migration; labour force retirements; skill development; low education levels; infrastructure investments and private sector growth.

Rural lifestyle is important to citizens and the council feels it should be maintained. Several factors impacting rural lifestyles include: the need to advance community development; the protection for community identity; influx of seasonal residents on small, remote areas; and the protection of citizens against crime and vandalism. In the same context, employment and human resource development can be impacted by the flux of workers through the development of a mobile workforce, which is participating in a labour force that expands throughout the province and the country.

The council was interested in understanding these issues with an aim of providing policy advice to the Provincial Government which will aid in its ability to support the future sustainability of the region. The process of providing additional policy advice on primary industries required the council to gain an understanding of the factors impacting the four key primary industry sectors (i.e. forestry, fishing, agriculture, and mining, oil and gas). Gaining an understanding of these factors included consultations with Regional Economic Development Boards (REDBs), business stakeholders, and government departments.

Council completed its work in 2011 with the submission of a policy advice document on human resources and infrastructural needs relating to the four primary industries within the Clarenville-Bonavista region.

Goal: By March 31, 2011, the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council will have developed a position paper to identify anticipated human resource and infrastructure needs in key industry sectors in support of regional sustainability.

Measure: Position paper developed

Indicator 1: Industry employment and skill analysis completed

Starting in 2008, the council concluded that it needed to focus its analysis on several key areas: data collection on the status of the current labor force; infrastructural analysis of buildings, roads and institutions; and a compilation of course offerings in support of primary industries.

By developing an inventory of current infrastructure and human resource needs for the Clarenville-Bonavista region, the council gained valuable information with respect to the fishing and aquaculture sector; agricultural sector; mining, oil and gas sector; and the forestry sector. The information gathering process built upon the council's initial work on regional infrastructure identification document which it began in 2007.

In the context of this issue, the council refers to infrastructure as public buildings, transportation routes, public services, physical training-related infrastructure, as well as, softer programming infrastructure including on-the-job training. Through a partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency (NL Stats), infrastructure maps were developed to identify industry locations and supportive services such as government offices, schools, hospitals and fish plants. The industry review built upon the 2007 revised demographic profile for the Clarenville-Bonavista region which better reflected the results of the 2006 census data. This work was completed in partnership with the Newfoundland Labrador Statistical Agency. Based upon information contained in the regional profile, council compiled key labour market supply and demand, educational attainment, demographic and related indicators for the region, as well as for the industry sectors identified above. By reviewing regional, social and economic reports, the council gained an understanding of the issues impacting the four primary industry sectors. Many of these issues directly impact labour market and infrastructure aspects of these sectors and added to its analysis of human resource and infrastructural needs.

The council also documented the location of K-12, public post-secondary and private post-secondary institutions (e.g., Discovery Centres and Key-In College) and it compiled an inventory of the College of the North Atlantic (Clarenville and Bonavista) and Key-In College (Clarenville) course offerings.

In September 2009, the council reviewed employment programs provided through the Labour Market Development Agreement and delivered by Services Canada and/or the Department of Human Resources, Labour & Employment (HRLE). The council learned that a fundamental change in program delivery occurred in November 2009 with the devolution of the Labour Market Agreement from federal to provincial responsibility. The Department of Human Resources, Labour & Employment currently has the responsibility for human resource development impacting primary industries in the province.

The council also reviewed business inventory database of Discovery Regional Economic Development Board. This information supported the work initially completed in 2007-2008. Additionally, the council examined industry profiles (i.e., human resource issues) completed by Discovery Regional Development Board and the Schooner Regional Development Corporation.

Through this process, the council discovered that the data on current infrastructure and human resource needs for these primary industries is increasing. For example, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture Human Resources Analysis referenced above. As well, the Eastern Suppliers Development Alliance (ESDA), in partnership with several regional economic development boards, was developing two human resource and infrastructure databases in support of economic development opportunities in the oil and gas industry for the Burin, Clarenville-Bonavista and Placentia Bay regions. These two databases were scheduled to be completed by March 31, 2010. However, due to unanticipated delays the deadline was extended to September 2010. These databases will inform council's information gathering processes.

In February 2010, council, in partnership with Memorial University and the Discovery Regional Development Board, conducted primary research by administering an industrial survey (focused on human resources and infrastructure) to key individuals and businesses working in all four primary sectors.

Based on the work council did on this issue, it was concluded that the task of completing an analysis of human resources and infrastructural needs for the four primary industry sectors was larger than first anticipated. In some respect, the analysis hinged upon other agencies and organizations completion of the various analytical tools. Consequently, the three year period covered by council's work (2008-2011) was insufficient to complete this indicator.

The council has included a recommendation to the Provincial Government on the need for an in-depth analysis of the four industry sectors in its March, 2011 policy advice document.

Indicator 2: Consultations completed with community, training institutions, industry sectors and the Provincial Government

Council determined that consultations can take place in many formats; one-to-one meetings, small focus groups and more formally, through the establishment of industry-community advisory committees. Council also felt that the College of the North Atlantic was the primary training institution in the region with respect to these industries. Finally, several Provincial Government departments were viewed as playing an active role in promoting developmental opportunities in these industry sectors. Council would target these departments as it completed its information gathering process. Finally, council aimed to conduct primary and secondary research with the assistance of researchers at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Council would enhance its expertise on primary industries by engaging industry representatives, government departmental representatives and community stakeholders through the establishment of a regional industry-community advisory committee.

Council commenced work in 2009-10, with several Provincial Government departments (i.e. Dept. of Innovation, Trade & Rural Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and Dept. of Fisheries & Aquaculture) and local agencies to identify ways in which additional industry and education program information can be gathered/obtained. This work advanced the research previously conducted in 2008-09. It also engaged the Newfoundland Labrador Statistics Agency and local industry stakeholders (e.g., Regional Economic development Boards, Chambers of Commerce, industry associations) in this regard. In addition, the council held meetings with officials from HRLE to document program strategies which encourage employment in the four primary industry sectors. The council learned that many of these programs are individualized and focus on moving participants from the Income Support Program into long-term employment opportunities.

Stemming from the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture presentation on human resources and infrastructure analysis, the council learned that there is a marginal opportunity for aquaculture in the

Clarenville - Bonavista region. Furthermore, the closure of fish plant operations, such as the one in Trouty, presented a need for the Provincial Government to work in partnership with industry and post-secondary institutions to re-train and/or find alternative employment options for displaced workers.

To further inform on its work, in 2009, the council invited a presentation from the Discovery Regional Development Board on the economic strategies included in its 2009-2010 Strategic Economic Plan. Priorities included in the entities economic plan focus on fisheries and aquaculture, tourism, oil and gas, agriculture and assisting municipalities.

In September 2009, the council, through the Planner, participated in information sessions regarding the proposed Hebron Project for the oil and gas industry. Issues covered during the sessions included: anticipated human resource and infrastructure requirements; impacts on local communities; and educational program delivery options for perspective employees.

This industrial review and subsequent public engagement processes allowed the council to identify gaps in education programs around supporting the needs of local firms and industries outside of the skilled trades. For example, there were a limited number of non-skilled trade course offerings at the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) to support the development of the forestry and sawmilling in the region.

In November 2009, the council hosted a regional forum (participants represented dairy industry, health agencies, fur industry, and the Provincial Government) on issues impacting the development of an integrated land use plan for the Province. Information from that session increased the council's understanding of anticipated human resource and infrastructure requirements for forestry and agricultural industries.

To supplement a policy advice submission on the agricultural industry by the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council, in December 2009, a companion policy advice paper was submitted to the Provincial Government, through its Department of Natural Resources. Subsequently, officials from the Department of Natural Resources engaged the Regional Council on the policy recommendations contained in its submission.

In January 2010, the council held meetings with officials from College of the North Atlantic to learn about training programs to support employment opportunities in the oil and gas industry. The council has learned that most of these employment opportunities are for individuals who have skilled trades.

The council has used this information as the premise for its citizen engagement process with industry stakeholders and relevant government departments. Due to the magnitude of area being studied, in 2010-2011 the council developed a partnership with Memorial University of Newfoundland to conduct thorough research on each individual industry sector and associated infrastructure. The council invited representatives from the Department of Innovation, Trade & Rural Development, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Natural Resources, Human Resources, Labour & Employment, as well as the Discovery Regional Development Board, College of the North Atlantic and Memorial University to participate in an advisory process. The information gathered during these regular consultations further informed the council's stakeholder engagement and policy advice processes.

Indicator 3: Position paper developed

In February 2010, the council developed a position paper entitled, "*Human Resources, Employment and Infrastructure for Primary Industries*". A copy of the position paper was sent to 15 individuals representing fisheries, forestry, and agriculture industries. The document was also sent to officials working with the Atlantic

Canada Opportunities Agency, the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development and the Discovery Regional Development Board.

Indicator 4: Findings communicated to relevant stakeholders

In March 2010, sharing its preliminary findings, supporting the development of an advisory paper and building on primary and secondary research processes, the council re-engaged local stakeholders. The council hosted a facilitated session with industry stakeholders, representatives from College of the North Atlantic, government departments and economic development agencies to explore the draft discussion paper. Notes captured during the session were incorporated into a revised discussion paper which was further reviewed by the council. Upon meeting with stakeholders and the College of the North Atlantic, it was learned that information was not available on future education program delivery models; this information is provided on a “contract as needed” basis.

In October 2010, the council invited representatives from government departments (DFA, INTRD), CNA and the Discovery Regional Economic Development Board to participate in the Primary Industries Advisory Group. The results from the primary industries literature review and draft position paper were shared with this group and all advice was incorporated into the council’s March 2011 policy advice document.

2010-11 Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council will have completed and communicated a position paper identifying the anticipated human resource and infrastructure needs in key industry sectors in support of regional sustainability.

Measure: A position paper identifying the anticipated human resource and infrastructure needs in the four primary industries in support of regional sustainability.

Indicators	Accomplishments 2010-11
A position paper is completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional Council completed its position paper on primary industries entitled, <i>“The Analysis of labour Market Factors Impacting Primary Industries in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador with a special interest in the Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat region”</i>.
Communication of position paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On March 28, 2011, the Council formally submitted its policy advice document entitled, <i>“Human Resources, Employment and Infrastructural Issues Impacting Primary Industries for Newfoundland Labrador”</i> to the Minister of Natural Resources. A copy of the policy advice has also been submitted to the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat.

Discussion of Results: The Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council feels these accomplishments are extensive and supports our original commitments proposed in 2008. The Regional Council is pleased with its performance on the indicators stated above.

9.4 Issue 4: Regional Vision Development

The Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council created a regional Vision 2020 document for the future sustainability of the rural region.

The Regional Council believes that the regional vision document is a dynamic document. It needs to reflect the changing environment and it must include continuous input from citizens.

A vision is a glimpse in time. It is a vision for what residents of the Clarenville-Bonavista region see as the future prosperity of their communities. The Regional Council recognizes that it takes time to make significant change and it is important to remain focused on the future and to plan for it, even in the midst of immediate challenges.

As regional priorities are accomplished, new priorities will be identified. This continuous review will provide an opportunity for the Regional Council to be informed about what is moving and changing in the region and where the opportunities and challenges exist.

The Regional Council recognizes that it takes time to make significant change and it is important to remain focused on the future, even in the midst of immediate challenges.

Based upon the input received from citizens and community-based groups in 2009-10, the Regional Council sees that citizens are engaging in meaningful dialogue about key policy and program issues which impact the future sustainability of the region. When stakeholders first read the Vision Document in 2007-08, many found the concept difficult to comprehend. As a result of the citizen engagement process, the council has discovered that citizens are better able to understand the concept of a regional Vision and able offer critical advice on the future of the region and on new policy advice to governments. Consequently, the input provided to council was more reflective of the issues and opportunities impacting the future of the region.

Goal: By March 31, 2011, the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council will have a regional vision that is reflective of community dialogue throughout the Clarenville-Bonavista region.

Measure: Vision reviewed by communities throughout the Clarenville-Bonavista region

Indicator 1: Vision document revised to be inclusive of feedback from community engagement process

In 2008-09, the council distributed the Vision document to representatives from 43 municipalities in the Clarenville-Bonavista region, and distributed it at the 2008 regional Municipal Symposium hosted by the Discovery Regional Development Board. The Vision document was also circulated at a multi-stakeholder forum on poverty reduction and homelessness held in the region.

In addition, the council hosted two regional multi-disciplinary engagement sessions. The first session included representatives from community youth networks, employment corporations, career counselors, government departments, regional school and health boards, and other groups such as Family Resource Centres. The second

session involved representatives who regularly attend meetings of the Bonavista Partners Network. Representatives included officials from the Department of Innovation, Trade & Rural Development, Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, College of the North Atlantic, Department of Human Resources, Labour & Employment, Community Business Development Corporation, Service Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and the Discovery Regional Development Board. In total, the council met with 28 individuals who reviewed and discussed the contents of the Vision document in detail.

In 2009-10, the council committed to re-define its reference to conducting “expanded sessions” as a part of its public engagement process. Expanded sessions are defined “as the need to broaden its engagement process by including a larger number of community-based groups which are grass-roots and are more representative of less formal organizations”. Consequently, four council members facilitated four local Vision review sessions involving 36 individuals and community groups throughout the region. These groups included volunteers from many grass-roots organizations, such as Lion’s Clubs, the Royal Canadian Legion, the Clarenville Rotary Club, community-based health groups, and regional trail associations.

Through the support of the regional planner, additional public engagement session took place in three communities that have completed visioning exercises and developed Integrated Community Sustainability Plans: Bonavista, Bloomfield and Norman’s Cove-Long Cove. During these sessions, an overview of the Rural Secretariat process was provided. This overview focused on the core lines of business which is supported by the work of the Regional Council. The council’s Vision 2020 document was shared at these sessions and the information/feedback captured was considered in the review process. The public sessions involved more than 215 individuals.

The council documented all feedback received as follows:

- ✚ Broad endorsement of vision of council, especially the need for public transportation systems.
- ✚ Broad endorsement for initiatives already taken by government: mandatory career development in K-12 system; voluntary, community service hours for high school graduates.
- ✚ More engaged dialogue – people focused more on important regional issues rather than seeking to understand the role of the council in developing a vision for the region.
- ✚ Participants sought detail and clarification about vision – e.g., fewer more stable firms in fishery.
- ✚ Specific areas where the council over or underestimated specific goals: Labour market participation by females percentages were considered an over-estimate; or need for public daycare in the region; or the need to establish an affordable housing program for youth.

2010-11 Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council will have an updated regional vision document that reflects the work of the council and the community engagement process.

Measure: Council develops an updated regional vision document that reflects its work and the community engagement process.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2010-11
Development of an updated Vision 2020 document	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On March 31, 2011, the council published its revised Vision 2020 document. A copy of the revised Vision has been posted on the Provincial Rural Secretariat website: www.gov.nl.ca/rural. Copies of the Vision have also been shared with government departments and local community-based organizations.

Discussion of Results: Having a vision for the region that is supported by a community consultation process is important. It has provided a plan and direction for the region and it has initiated a strong community consultation component. Development of a vision provides people with the sense of empowerment that they can influence the future of their communities. The Regional Council has achieved the activities outlined in its plan.

10. Additional Highlights

The Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council has provided opportunities to broaden public dialogue on long-term opportunities and challenges facing the region. It aimed to provide input and advice to the Provincial Government on these opportunities and challenges. This is a long-term process that will require ongoing collaboration with citizens and stakeholders in the region.

The council feels that its performance through 2010-11 has allowed it to make advancements in this process. The council has provided an open and transparent means for rural perceptions, realities, opportunities, challenges and potential solutions to be discussed, debated and deliberated. It has brought together citizens, stakeholders and interests from differing backgrounds with differing priorities and perspectives, differing bases of information and knowledge, and differing expectations. It has built confidence, leadership and trust, and it has broadened public awareness of issues.

Citizens are asking for information on what the council has accomplished since its inception in October 2005. The council broadened its work outside of the priorities contained in the 2008-11 Activity Plan. In some respects, the focus has also included the council's need to support government departments, promote partnership development and seek other policy advice opportunities. Consequently, the council has become more informative of its work by sharing highlights of its efforts with citizens and relevant stakeholders.

In addition to the points raised in Section 9, two additional highlights are worthy of mention. The Regional Council has been keenly interested in gaining knowledge on the issues impacting rural communities and how to translate knowledge to inform public policy and decision-making. These advice documents were consistent with the Rural Secretariat's strategic directions and mandate, and will serve to inform the work of the council in 2011-14.

- ✦ *Policy Advice on the Fishing Industry:* In January 2010, in response to the fishing industry renewal process, the council extended an offer to assist the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture in its public engagement process. The council's aim was to assist the Provincial Government to further explore the recommendations from the Memorandum of Understanding between the community and industry stakeholders.
- ✦ *Affordable Housing:* The council has continued to advocate for additional program supports to address the issues of affordable housing in the region. In March, the council was pleased to hear about the Provincial Government's support of individuals who are impacted by housing instability issues and the investments it has made to help combat these challenges.

11. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

As the nature of the work of the Council is broad-based and long-term in nature, the challenges and opportunities it faces remain fairly similar from year to year. The council feels that these challenges and opportunities can be categorized along three themes.

Provision of policy advice to government

The council's mandate commits it to reaching consensus on the priorities for change in its region and to identifying policies and programs to encourage desired change. The challenge for the council, given the range of issues, perspectives, interests and needs within its region, is to reach consensus on priorities for change and on policy advice to provide to government. Throughout 2010-11, The council has continued to provide advice to government on many rural issues. Much of this advice has resulted from research, public engagement and partnership development processes. The council's intention is to base its policy advice on issues of importance to the Clarenville-Bonavista region, but have equal impact and importance to the entire province.

The opportunity for the council is to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body within the region that can both provide informed bottom-up policy advice to government, as well as respond to top-down policy level requests from government that may impact on the region is improving. While more awareness has been created, the council continued to be challenged with informing communities and citizens on the role and mandate of the Rural Secretariat and the influence councils can have in directing the development of future public policy. Council hopes to continue in efforts to influence strategic investments and the creation of budget considerations impacting the region.

Regional collaboration

The Regional Council's mandate commits it to sharing information, advancing regional cooperation and to encouraging regional partners to more actively participate on matters that can advance regional sustainability. The challenge for the council is to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body within the region that can advance collaboration, community-based leadership and resource –sharing opportunities. There are two opportunities for the Council. First, it can position itself as a broad-based and cross-sectoral advisory body that can lead, participate and/or support regional collaboration across a range of sectors,

communities and individual interests. To be effective in this role, the council and Government must work collaboratively to appoint new members to the council that are representative of the entire region. Currently, there exist gaps in youth and some geographical representation on the council. Second, through the Regional Partnership Planner, the council is being informed of broader regional issues and initiatives that impact public policy. Council can utilize this information as it seeks out opportunities to provide advice to government and its agencies and departments. The council's 2011-14 activity planning cycle will continue to reflect these opportunities. Lastly, as a broad-based advisory body, it can identify the various supports necessary to foster collaboration and provide advice to government to advance efforts to provide such supports.

Regional communications

The council understands that a range of non-governmental organizations in rural areas provide advice to government on a range of policy matters. In large part, these organizations are focused on particular agendas, needs and interests, such as and among others, regional economic development, environmental awareness and protection, social policy advancement and municipal governance. The challenge for council is to clearly and effectively communicate its mandate and role to other regional stakeholders and interests, and to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body that can assist other stakeholders. The opportunity for the council, through new and strengthened relationships with regional stakeholders, is to ensure that a broad range of perspectives are considered as it identifies regional priorities, provides advice to government and fosters collaboration in 2011 and the years ahead.

Appendix A: Strategic Directions

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.

2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability

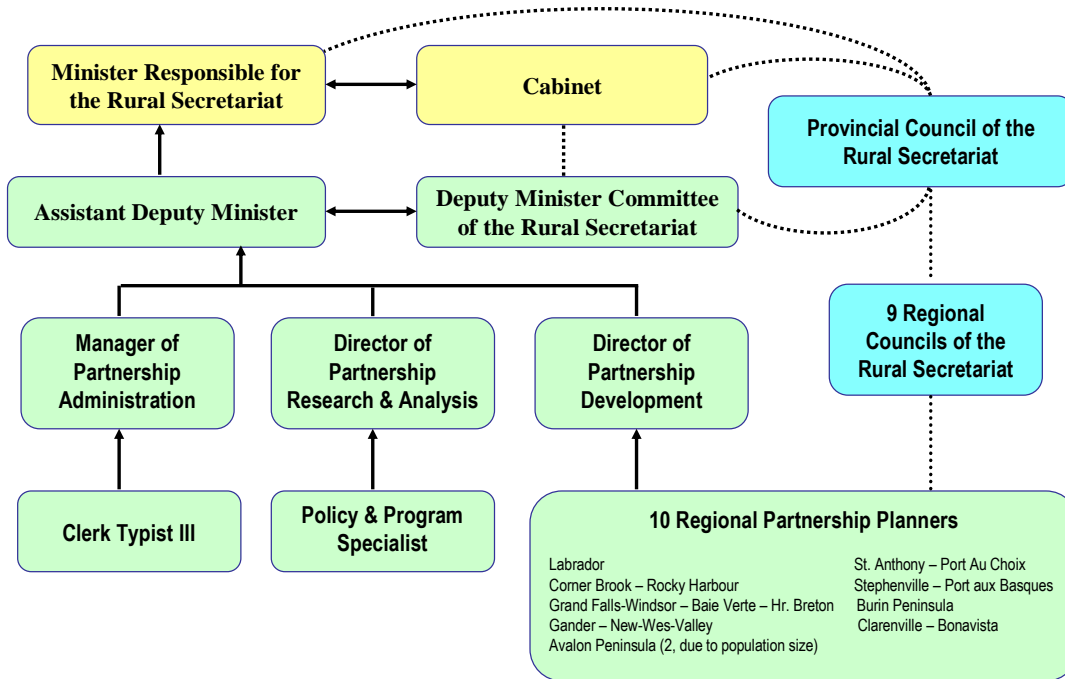
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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

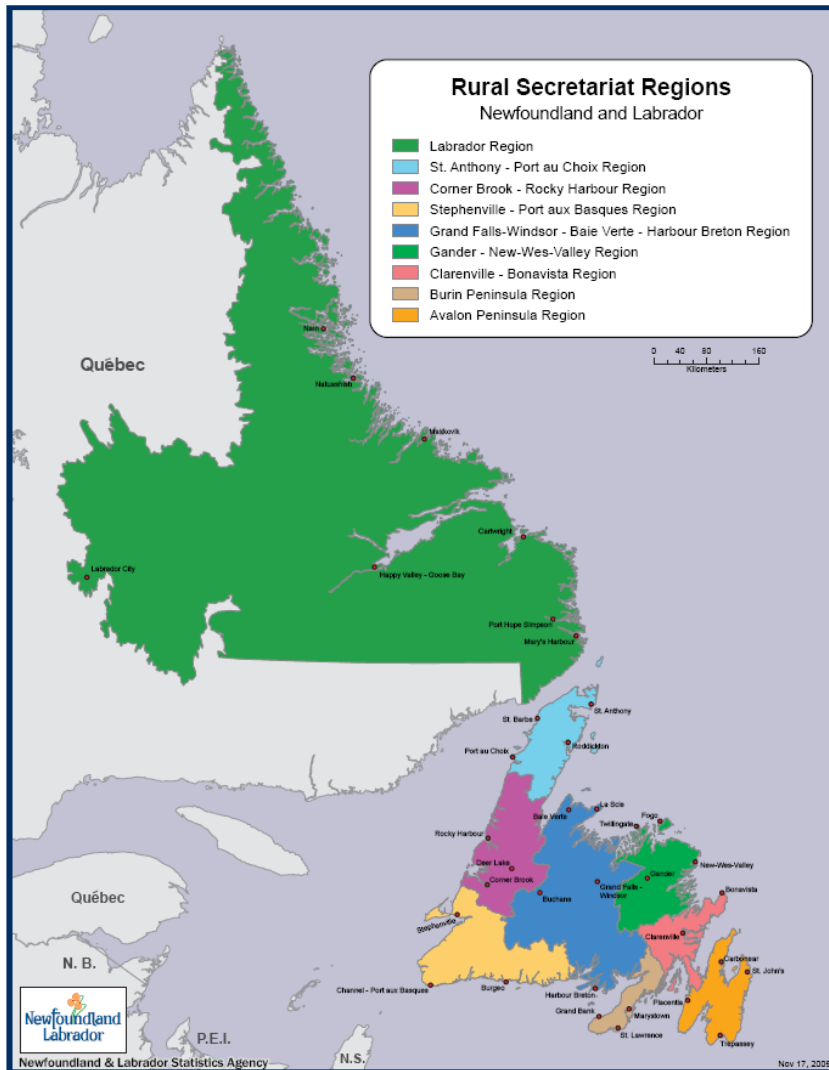
- Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy

Appendix B: Organizational Structure

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions



Appendix D: Mandate of Rural Secretariat and Provincial Council

Mandate of the Rural Secretariat

The Rural Secretariat's mandate is to:

- Promote the well-being of rural Newfoundland and Labrador through a comprehensive and coordinated approach aimed at integrating economic, social, cultural aspects of rural and 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 rural concerns are considered throughout the Provincial Government and promoted at the federal level.
- Carry out research and analysis of economic and social issues affecting rural Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Help communities and regions identify and take advantage of growth opportunities.
- Promote awareness of provincial and federal programs and services regarding rural communities.

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 Province.
- To review key economic and social measures (e.g., education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, Employment Income 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 a) advance, b) negatively impact or c) need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the five year period.
- To advance cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about the 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 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.

Cover Photos



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Photo Courtesy of Donald Mifflin



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