



**Gander —
New-Wes-Valley Regional
Council
Activity Plan 2011-14**



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Message from the Chairperson

As Chair of the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat and in accordance with the Provincial Government's commitment to transparency and accountability, I hereby submit the council's 2011-14 Activity Plan. My signature below is on behalf of the entire council and is indicative of our accountability for the preparation of and achievement of the objective contained in the plan; pursuant to section 7(4) of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

In the development of this plan the council considered the Strategic Direction of the Minister and is committed to supporting these directions in the coming years. Most significantly, the council acknowledges and would like to highlight the animated nature of the activity plan and process as a living, breathing document and strategy, reflective of the ever changing needs of the region and our response as a council. As such, the plan is a measure of the health of our region. Through community consultation and capacity building processes the council has and will continue to capture the challenges and opportunities as articulated by the region's residents.

As highlighted, the work of council is a long-term process that requires collaboration and capacity building with citizens and stakeholders within the region and throughout the province. We all have a responsibility in ensuring regional sustainability. Past work has allowed us to play a catalytic role in bringing agencies and people together. We will continue our community engagement and capacity building role in the years ahead and strive towards creating an enhanced culture of collaboration and cooperation that is conducive to economic and social sustainability and growth.

As a measurement tool to gauge the sustainability of the region and our progress as a council, we will strive to identify and respond to the challenges and opportunities that arise from this process, building upon our previous experience and efforts to continue to help inform and to provide credible advice and policy recommendation to the Provincial Government. As overarching themes we will continue to emphasize the need for consultation with residents and community stakeholder groups on issues of significant importance and the fostering of a 'rural lens' approach to policy and decision-making.

As a council we are committed to our region and through this process we will continue to work with our regional partners and the Provincial Government to initiate and participate in discussions and research endeavors that help shed light on the socio-economic challenges and opportunities within this dynamic and vibrant region.

Best Regards,



Nadine Decker, Chairperson

1. Regional Council Overview

The Gander - New-Wes-Valley Regional Council is comprised of six members; two female and four male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region. Council meets at a minimum four times a year. In addition, members also participate in engagement sessions, learning events and sub-committee work.

Regional Council members	Community
Nadine Decker (Chairperson)	Fogo Island
Victor Cassell	Cottlesville
Edythe Goodridge	Salvage
Rick Lackey	Twillingate
David Regular	Summerford
James Snow	Lewisporte

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

The Rural Secretariat also funds a Regional Partnership Planner position (Appendix B) in the region, who among other duties, act as an information resource for the council and facilitates the work of the council. The Planner for the Gander - New-Wes-Valley Region (Appendix C) is Tanya Noble. Her office is located in the Municipality of New-Wes-Valley.

2. 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.

3. Lines of Business

Through its work 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 policy advice documents.

Collaboration: The Rural Secretariat understands that sustainability in rural Newfoundland and Labrador can be significantly advanced through more and better collaboration amongst 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, the rural regions of this province. The Rural Secretariat also works directly with regional partners and councils on a host of community-based research initiatives and 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.

4. Values

The core values explain the character of our organization. The core values embraced by our Regional Council are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Collaboration: | Each member is committed to building a culture of collaboration within the region |
| Creativity/innovation: | Each member strives to transcend traditional ideas, rules and patterns, and to work together to create new ideas, relationships and approaches |
| Inclusion: | Each member acknowledges the differences and respects the views and perspectives of all. Each person will take |

steps to ensure all have an opportunity to express their own views

- Learning culture:** Each member accepts that we have a lot to learn and relishes the opportunity to learn more
- Participation/engagement:** Each member believes citizen/stakeholder/community engagement is essential to the development of good public policy
- Teamwork:** Each member provides support to one another and works co-operatively, respect differing views.
- Honesty:** Each member is open and honest in their conduct and interaction maintains the highest of integrity at all times
- Excellence:** Each member strives for excellence and quality in everything they do
- Transparency** Each member is committed to sharing open and objective advice based on sound information and principles
- Trust** Each member agrees to be open and supportive when partnering and to follow through on requests and commitments

5. Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Regional Council include the Rural Secretariat (Appendix D), the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat, other Regional Council's, and departments and agencies within the Provincial Government, among others.

The Regional Council also engages with officials of departments and agencies of the provincial government, as well as individuals, groups and organizations within the region during the course of its investigation and identification of issues and opportunities pertinent to its mandate.

6. Vision

The vision of the Gander - New-Wes-Valley Regional Council is:

Healthy, educated, prosperous people living in safe, inclusive communities within a sustainable region.

Through its work, the council continues to identify priorities that contribute to regional sustainability which considers the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of the region.

7. Mission

The Regional Council is committed to supporting the mission of the Rural Secretariat by fostering positive relationships between government departments and rural communities. As such, Council will continue to provide an avenue for public engagement, as well as local driven research projects or learning events on issues of significance. These processes aim to inform and advise Government of the programs and policy impacting the sustainability of the rural communities that comprise the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Region.

The mission of the Rural Secretariat is:

By March 31, 2017, the Rural Secretariat will have worked with regional and departmental partners to improve the sustainability prospects of rural communities and regions.

For additional detail please refer to the Rural Secretariat Activity Plan 2011-14.

8. Issues

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

In consideration of our mandate, financial resources and the strategic directions of the Rural Secretariat and Government of Newfoundland Labrador (Appendix A), the council will continue to identify key elements we believe are essential to this region's sustainability. In reflection of our experience over the past years, including the 2008-2011 activity planning and reporting processes, council is committed to continuing to examine the economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects of the region with the intent to articulate insightful and timely advice to the Provincial Government.

As we draw upon our past experience it has become obvious that many of the issues we examine are quite complex; each requiring time and a comprehensive approach as we strive for tangible solutions. To ensure council is effective in its work we will utilize a combination of tools as we examine and learn more about these important issues. To become well informed of the opportunities and challenges that face this region we will continue to utilize various methods of information gathering, encourage collaboration, help design and conduct necessary research, and engage citizens on these important matters. This approach is consistent with the Government's strategic directions and the Rural Secretariat as we continue to aim for a sustainable rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

The council will be reporting on the same objective for the three years of this plan. This one objective is no small task. It allows council the flexibility to thoroughly examine issues and where deemed necessary, engage stakeholders on these topics. The council may choose to examine one major topic over the three years of the plan, advising Government on different elements of that issue (i.e. Marine Resources or Fishery) or choose several different topics on matters related this region's sustainability.

Objective:

By March 31, 2012 council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on an issue(s) that relates to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice

Indicators:

- Issue identified
- Researched issue
- Determined advice to submit to Government
- Communicated advice to Government

Appendix A: Strategic Direction

1. Title: Rural Newfoundland and Labrador

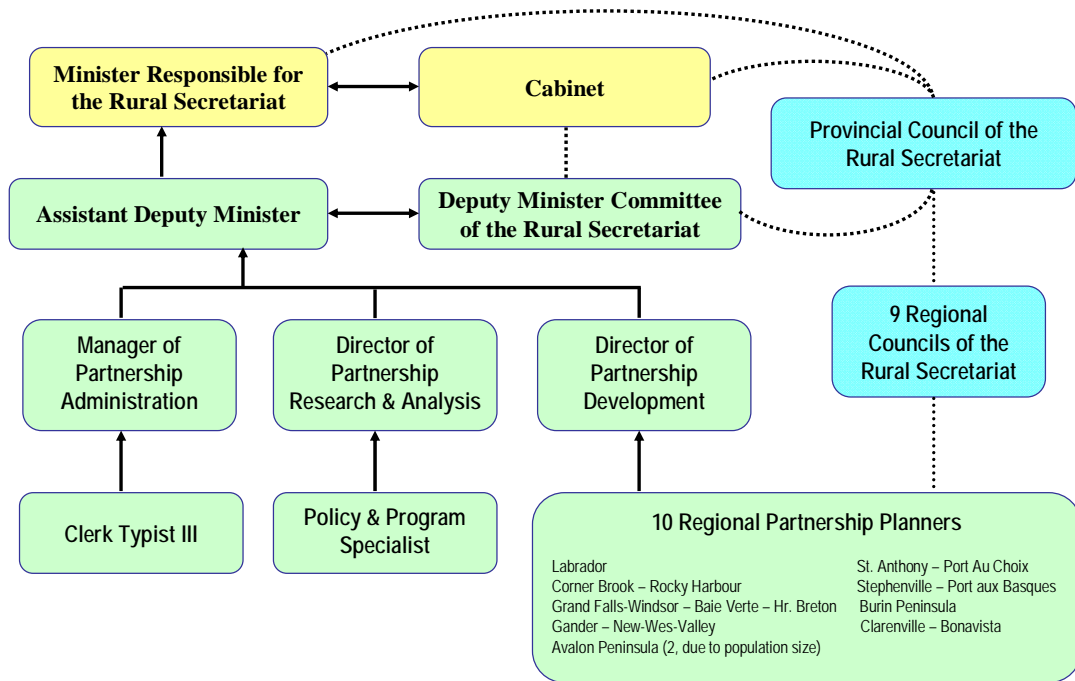
Outcome Statement: A sustainable rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

Clarifying Statement: This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Rural Secretariat in the areas of:

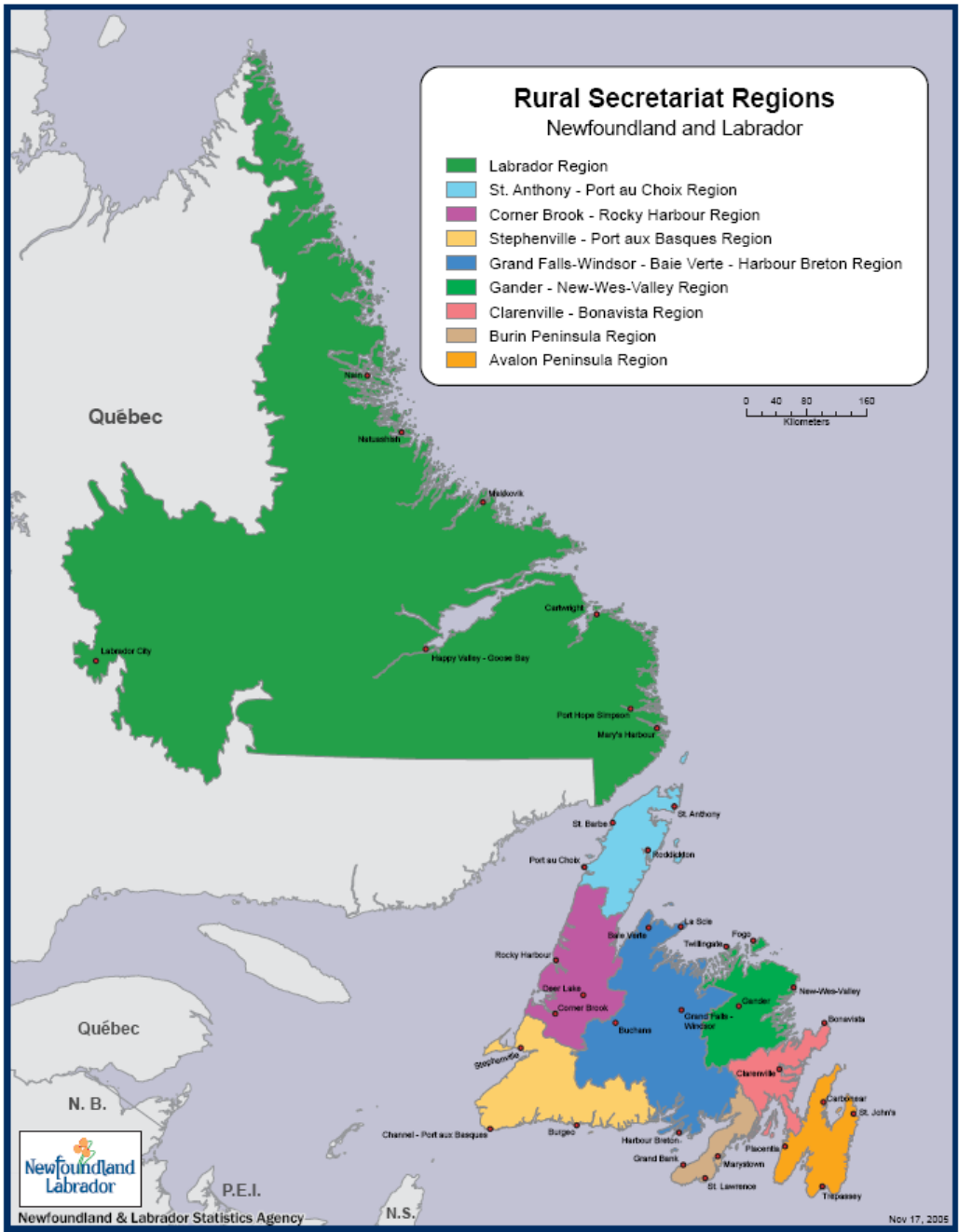
- Citizen-based policy advice
- Public dialogue and engagement
- Collaboration
- Research

Focus Areas/Components of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:
	addressed in the council's activity plan
1. Citizen-based policy advice	X
2. Public dialogue and engagement	X
3. Collaboration	X
4. Research	X

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions



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 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 effect Provincial and Regional sustainability.

Photo Credits



Courtesy of Jenny Rockett



Courtesy of Nadine Decker



Courtesy of Nadine Decker



Courtesy of Nadine Decker



Rural Secretariat

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