

Municipal and Provincial Affairs

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# Strategic Plan

2021-2023



Newfoundland  
&  
Labrador





## MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, I am pleased to present the Strategic Plan for the period of April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2023. This plan was prepared in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act** and sets out how the Department will address government's strategic directions and my mandate as Minister. In April 2021, reorganization of government Departments was undertaken. The new Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs consists of the functions formerly within the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities that relate to Municipal Finance, Municipal Support, Local Governance and Land Use Planning and Strategic Financial Management. The Department is also responsible for Provincial Affairs, including the Registrar General for the province.

This plan builds upon the strategic directions, commitments and investments of our government, and identifies the Department's key goals and objectives to be accomplished throughout the 2021-2023 planning period. Specifically, strategic priorities of advancing sustainability and support for local governments through improved processes and regulations will lead to better outcomes for communities and residents. Another priority area will be a review of provincial monuments, observations and the Provincial Coat of Arms.

Regionalization and service sharing will be a focal point for the Department during this planning period. As the global pandemic continues, the Department will also focus efforts on assisting and supporting communities through these exceptional circumstances.

As Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and the achievement of the specific goals and objectives contained herein.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Howell'.

Hon. Krista Lynn Howell  
Minister of Provincial and Municipal Affairs



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# Departmental Overview

The Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is a category 1 government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act** that supports the economic, social and environmental sustainability of municipalities, communities and regions through the delivery of effective programs and services.

The Department looks to enhance the province's resilience through the utilization of financial and administrative tools to support development of community capacity, regional collaboration and sound municipal governance.

The Department also is responsible for hosting the annual Premier's Forum on Local Government, collaborating with other stakeholder Departments to review provincial monuments and observances, and work with Indigenous governments and organizations to recognize and commemorate our historical sites, statutory holidays and other significant cultural areas.

Department Executive, with support from the Policy and Strategic Planning Division, address matters pertaining to the Provincial Affairs mandate of the Department.

## Lines of Business

The Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is organized into:

- **Local Governance and Land Use Planning**
  - The Local Governance Section supports the vision of viable sustainable communities led by strong local governments. The Land Use Planning Section promotes and supports growth of sustainable communities.
- **Municipal Finance**
  - The Division provides financial assistance and guidance to municipalities with respect to funding programs, borrowing, debt servicing, and financial compliance. Provides financial assistance and support through special assistance grants and community enhancement, which provides short-term employment for workers in rural areas of the Province. Administers the Canada Community Building Fund (Gas Tax).

- **Municipal Support**
  - The Division is responsible for the provision of ongoing support and advice on local government issues. Regional offices serve as the primary contact between the department and local governments. Regional director, managers and staff are often the face of the department with local governments in the province.
- **Policy and Strategic Planning**
  - The Division coordinates and supports the department's policy agenda..
- **Strategic Financial Management**
  - This Division is a shared service providing financial management and general operations services to the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. The Division is the point of contact for all ABC financial reporting through the department. Is the main departmental contact for the Department of Finance and Treasury Board related to financial functions, budget submissions, public accounts and budget monitoring submitted by departments and ABCs.

## Reporting Entities

Under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, a number of government entities also prepare plans and annual reports. Entities, which report to the Minister include:

- Municipal Assessment Agency
- West Newfoundland Regional Appeal Board
- Central Newfoundland Regional Appeal Board
- Eastern Newfoundland Regional Appeal Board
- Labrador Regional Appeal Board
- North East Avalon Regional Plan Oversight Committee [Inactive]
- Humber Valley Regional Planning Advisory Authority Leadership Committee [Inactive]

For more information on the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, please visit us online at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/mpa/>



## Legislation

**Assessment Act, 2006;**  
**Avian Emblem Act;**  
**Building Standards Act;**  
**City of Corner Brook Act;**  
**City of Mount Pearl Act;**  
**City of St. John's Act;**  
**City of St. John's Municipal Taxation Act;**  
**Coat of Arms Act;**  
**Commemoration Day Act;**  
**Crown Corporations Local Taxation Act;**  
**Evacuated Communities Act, 2016;**  
**Family Homes Expropriation Act;**  
**Floral Emblem Act;**  
**Housing Act;**  
**Housing Association Loans Act;**  
**Mineral Emblem Act;**  
**Municipal Affairs Act;**  
**Municipal Authorities Amendment Act, 1991;**  
**Municipal Elections Act;**  
**Municipalities Act, 1999;**  
**Provincial Anthem Act;**  
**Provincial Flag Act;**  
**Regional Service Boards Act, 2012;**  
**Remembrance Day Act;**  
**St. John's Centennial Foundation Act;**  
**St. John's Municipal Council Parks Act;**  
**Standard Time Act;**  
**Taxation of Utilities and Cable Television Companies Act; and**  
**Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000.**

## Mandate

The mandate of the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is to advance the economic, social and environmental sustainability of municipalities, communities, regions and the province through the delivery of effective programs, services and supports.

## Staff and Budget

The Department's gross expenditure budget for 2021-22 is \$153,518,400 with planned related revenue of approximately \$64,806,100 for a net expenditure of \$88,712,300. The Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs has 74 positions, currently with 62

employees (49 permanent, nine temporary, and four contractual) located in three offices throughout the province. 63 per cent are female, with 37 per cent male.

Region	Positions
Eastern	66
Central	4
Western	4

### Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs include:

- Local governments that consist of approximately 270 municipalities, 172 local service districts and five Inuit Community Governments; and

Major stakeholders include:

- Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador;
- Professional Municipal Administrators;
- Combined Councils of Labrador;
- Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Professional Planners;
- Provincial and Territorial Officials' Committee on Local Governance; and
- The general public.

### Vision

The vision of the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is strengthened municipalities through sustainable, regional governance, with shared services, that supports vibrant communities and encourages economic development.

# Strategic Issues

## Issue 1 - Supporting Local Governments through Enhanced Processes and Legislation

The Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is committed to exploring solutions that will meet the needs of current and future states of local governments. This includes providing local governments with the necessary tools to explore new and innovative ways for the delivery of municipal services to residents, support community capacity and encourage economic activity.

As a priority, the Department will advance and implement changes to municipal legislation to ensure an effective and modern framework for municipal governance. This work will also support the Department's ongoing commitment to explore models for regional collaboration with respect to governance and service sharing.

The Department must also look within its internal operations to determine how service delivery and internal processes may be improved. Greater use of technology can lead to improved access to services and quality of service delivery for the Department's clients.

### **GOAL:**

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have modernized municipal legislation, made recommendations on reforming the municipal election process, and improved service delivery that supports strong local governance, builds community capacity and encourages economic activity.

### **Indicators:**

- Amended municipal legislation, regulations, and/or policies as identified by the Department.

- Enhanced capacity for effective and sustainable local governance, including regional collaboration and shared services opportunities.
- Identified opportunities to modernize operations and deliver services more efficiently.

### **Objective 1:**

By March 31, 2022, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have furthered modernized municipal legislation, reviewed the report on regionalization, examined incentivizing cooperation and completed an inventory of service delivery activities.

### **Indicators:**

- Advanced recommendations related to modernization of municipal legislation.
- Approval to advance the necessary legislative amendments to allow for a more efficient and effective regional appeal board hearing and decision process.
- Introduced new municipal conduct legislation.
- Continued support for municipalities through the COVID-19 response and recovery cycles.
- Furthered the required legislation for the recognition of the Newfoundland and Labrador Professional Planners Association.
- Supported the annual Premier's Forum on Local Government, providing a venue that highlights challenges and opportunities for strong local government initiatives.
- Reviewed departmental service delivery standards.

### **Objective 2:**

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have updated municipal legislation, provided recommendations on regionalization, determined best practices on incentivizing cooperation and updated service delivery procedures.

## **Issue 2 - Regionalization of Local Governance and Service Sharing**

The advancement and implementation of changes to municipal legislation will also support the Department's ongoing commitment to promote regional collaboration with respect to governance and service sharing.

The Department will work in partnership with key stakeholders to explore opportunities for regional collaboration to occur with respect to governance and service sharing.

Government will study the Joint Working Group on Regionalization report and recommendations with the goal of advancing a regionalization model that is flexible and reflective of the geography, demographics and historical connections within the province.

### **Goal:**

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have reviewed the Joint Working Group report and associated recommendations to determine a regionalization model for local governance and shared services.

### **Indicators:**

- Worked within government mandate to ensure that programs are leveraged to support regionalization.
- Developed an incentive regime to support regionalization and shared services initiatives.
- Amended legislation to allow for local governance regionalization and shared services agreements.

## **Objective 1:**

By March 31, 2022, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have initiated the necessary legislative review and amendments, where required, to support a regional governance model, as well as continued consultations within Government and with external stakeholders on regionalization ensuring an informed approach to regionalization.

## **Indicators:**

- Publicly released the Joint Working Group Report.
- Commenced a review of the Joint Working Group recommendations.
- Utilized the Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador and Professional Municipal Administrators networks and forums to continue engagement with stakeholders on regionalization and shared services.
- Continued consultations with stakeholders.

## **Objective 2:**

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have developed legislative amendments to advance implementation of the chosen regional local governance model.

## **Issue 3 - Provincial Monuments, Observances and Coat of Arms**

The Department will participate in the interdepartmental working group that will prioritize efforts focusing on provincial monuments and observances. Through public engagement and close consultation with Indigenous governments and organizations, this working group will provide recommendations on how best to recognize and

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commemorate our history. This will be the basis for reviewing names of historical and commemorative sites, statutory holidays and other areas of cultural importance.

The Department will work with Indigenous governments and organizations to review and amend the current provincial Coat of Arms. The amendments will more accurately reflect peoples and cultures of the Province.

The Department will work with an interdepartmental working group and Indigenous governments and organizations on the creation and installation of a statue that commemorates the Beothuk people.

### **Goal:**

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have collaborated with other stakeholder Departments on designation or re-naming commemorative sites, statutory holidays and areas of cultural significance, recommended amendments to the provincial Coat of Arms, and based on guidance from the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, unveiled the statue commemorating the Beothuk people.

### **Indicators:**

- Consulted with stakeholders and Indigenous governments and organizations on areas of cultural significance
- Participate in the working group to confirmed names for commemorative sites.
- Established, through collaboration, with stakeholder departments, a process to review, confirm, or rename commemorative sites and statutory holidays.

### **Objective 1:**

By March 31, 2022, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have undertaken consultations with the public and Indigenous governments and organizations on provincial monuments, observances and reviewed and made

amendments to the **Coat of Arms Act**, and continued work on creation of a Beothuk statue.

### **Indicators:**

- Undertaken public engagement and close consultation with Indigenous governments and organizations to review, recognize and re-name commemorative history and observances.
- Worked with Indigenous governments and organizations to update the provincial Coat of Arms.
- Amended legislation to remove offensive language from the Coat of Arms.

### **Objective 2:**

By March 31, 2023, the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs will have participated in recommended name changes to monuments and observations and contributed to the installation of the commemorative Beothuk statue.





