

North East Avalon Regional Plan Oversight Committee

Annual Report 2014-15

SEP 28 2015

DOC/2015/04458

Ms. Sandra Barnes
Clerk of the House of Assembly
East Block, Confederation Building

Dear Ms. Barnes:

On behalf of Minister Hutchings, I am pleased to submit the 2014-15 Annual Report for the North East Avalon Regional Plan Oversight Committee in accordance with section 9 of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. Ten copies of the report are enclosed.

Please feel free to contact me at 729-3052 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



COLLEEN JANES
Deputy Minister for Municipal Affairs

Enclosures

Message from the Chairperson



I am pleased to present the 2014-15 Annual Report for the North East Avalon Regional Plan Oversight Committee. This committee is comprised of representatives of the 15 municipalities from and including the towns of Witless Bay and Holyrood and all municipalities north from there to Cape St. Francis, including Wabana. I am pleased to be involved in the process as we work together towards developing a regional land use plan for government's consideration.

The Committee is mandated under the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000*. There is no legislated mandate to collect revenue and submit financial statements.

As Chairperson of this committee, I can attest that this report has been prepared in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act* requirements for a category three entity. Careful consideration has been given to the strategic directions of government. In particular, the Committee's activities will contribute to the "community partnership" and "regional cooperation" components of the *Strengthened Municipal Capacity* strategic direction.

As a committee, we look forward to contributing to the development of a new regional land use plan. My signature below indicates that the Committee accepts accountability for the preparation of this report and the results reported.

Sincerely,

Keith Hutchings
Minister of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs

Contents

- 1.0 Overview 1**
 - 1.1 Committee Membership2
 - 1.2 Budget3
 - 1.3 Contact Information3
 - 1.4 Mandate3
 - 1.5 Vision4
 - 1.6 Mission4
- 2.0 Shared Commitments 4**
- 3.0 Report on Performance 4**
- 4.0 Opportunities and Challenges 7**

North East Avalon Regional Planning Oversight Committee Annual Report 2014-15

- Advising the planning consultant, through or in conjunction with MNL, on issues within the regional planning area;
- Providing available background material or studies to the planning consultant, through MNL;
- Reviewing and approving an appropriate public consultation process, based on recommendations from MNL, its project management consultant, the department and the planning consultant;
- Communicating progress on the regional land use plan development to municipal councils and provincial departments, as applicable to the individual committee member;
- Reviewing drafts of the regional land use plan and providing comments to the consultant, through or in conjunction with MNL and their project management consultant;
- Recommending to the Minister approval of the final version of the draft regional land use plan; and
- Working with the department to organize statutory public hearings on the draft regional land use plan, as required by the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000*.

1.1 Committee Membership

Minister Keith Hutchings (Chair)	Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs
Mayor John Kennedy	Town of Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove
Mayor Ken McDonald	Town of Conception Bay South
Mayor Gary Gosine	Town of Wabana
Mayor Patrick O'Driscoll	Town of Bay Bulls
Mayor Sébastien Després	Town of Witless Bay
Mayor Randy Simms	City of Mount Pearl
Mayor Gary Goobie	Town of Holyrood
Mayor Dan Bobbett	Town of Paradise
Mayor Joedy Wall	Town of Pouch Cove
Mayor Dennis O'Keefe	City of St. John's
Mayor Moses Tucker	Town of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's
Mayor Christopher Dredge	Town of Bauline
Mayor Darrin Thorne	Town of Flatrock
Mayor Nat Hutchings	Town of Petty Harbour-Maddox Cove
Mayor Ralph Tapper	Town of Torbay

1.2 Budget

The Committee does not have an office or staff, nor does it manage any funds or financial statements. Furthermore, members of the Committee do not receive remuneration.

Prior to commencing the North East Avalon Regional Planning process, the province and the 15 municipalities agreed to share the cost of developing the plan on a 50/50 basis, including the costs of a project management firm and a consultant. The municipalities contribute on a per capita basis using the 2011 Statistics Canada Census. MNL, in its capacity as project management lead, administers the funds on behalf of the plan partners.

1.3 Contact Information

The Leadership Committee can be contacted as follows:

North East Avalon Regional Plan Oversight Committee
c/o Anna Myers, MCIP
Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs
Main Floor, West Block, Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6
Tel: (709) 729-5302
annamyers@gov.nl.ca

1.4 Mandate

The mandate of the Committee is to oversee the preparation of a regional land use plan for the North East Avalon regional planning area.

Whereas the North East Avalon has no designated regional planning authority, the Minister is the regional authority for that area as per section 7(2) of the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000* (URPA). As such, the Committee derives its mandate from section 9 of the URPA which states:

9. (1) Where a regional authority for a regional planning area is the Minister,

the preparation of a regional plan for that area shall include a procedure for consultation with the municipalities and other appropriate persons and organizations in the regional planning area;
and

he or she may appoint persons to oversee the consultation procedure and development of the regional plan.

(2) Persons appointed under paragraph (1)(b) shall include representatives from each municipality and other persons and organizations that the Minister considers appropriate from the regional planning area.

To view the *Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000* in its entirety, please visit:

<http://assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/statutes/u08.htm>.

1.5 Vision

The vision of the committee is of communities in the North East Avalon region with viable, sustainable municipal services led by strong local governments.

1.6 Mission

Given the Committee's limited mandate, the development of a mission with accompanying measures and indicators would be redundant to the objectives, which are already developed in the current activity plan.

2.0 Shared Commitments

The development of the regional land use plan is a commitment shared by the mayors from each of the region's 15 municipalities as well as the Minister for Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs. This commitment relies on support from the Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL), serving in the capacity of project management lead, staff from participating municipal governments, and the staff of the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs.

3.0 Report on Performance

The North East Avalon has experienced growth and development in recent years and growth is expected to continue. Land use planning in the region is guided by the St. John's Urban Region Regional Plan which was approved in 1976. Municipal plans for each of the 15 municipalities provide detailed local policies and regulations that must comply with regional land use policies established in the St. John's Urban Region Regional Plan (SJURRP).

All of the municipal plans have been updated since the SJURRP first came into effect. Many of the municipal plans have also had amendments completed to reflect changes in land use priorities and development patterns since they were first implemented. The SJURRP has been amended in excess of 40 times since it was implemented in order to provide consistency between the regional land use policies with those of individual municipalities. Developing a new regional plan that better reflects longer term land use trends and development priorities will ensure a coherent and sustainable vision and land use strategy to better support the growth and development of the region.

In December 2014, the Oversight Committee approved a terms of reference and issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to hire a consultant to undertake various components of the development of a land use plan. The Committee received one proposal in response to the RFP. However, the Oversight Committee felt that the proposal was unsatisfactory and chose not to award a contract.

The Request for Proposals was adjusted and re-issued in early 2015. Despite this setback a milestone in the development of the regional plan was accomplished. In 2014, the St. John's Urban Region Regional Plan was amended to consolidate and digitize the land use map in preparation for development of a new North East Avalon regional plan.

The development of a regional land use plan for the North East Avalon supports the Minister's strategic direction to *Strengthened Municipal Capacity* by building community partnerships through regional cooperation.

The Committee reports on the same annual objective for each year of its Activity Plan (2014-17). However, the indicators will change in subsequent years as the work advances.

Annual Objective: By March 31, 2015, the committee will have overseen and facilitated the development of the North East Avalon's regional land use plan.

Measure: Has overseen and facilitated the development of the regional land use plan.

Indicators:

- **Approved terms of reference/call for proposals for a consultant.**

The Oversight Committee approved the terms of reference and issued a request for proposals (RFP) in December 2014. There was only one response to the RFP. The respondent did not meet the minimum required score to be considered for selection.

The Committee suspected the timing of the RFP may have contributed to its weak response. The RFP was re-issued in March 2015. It is anticipated that a consultant will be recommended by July, 2015.

- **Recommended preferred consultant.**

Due to the need to re-issue the RFP, a consultant was not selected by the end of the fiscal year. It is anticipated that a consultant will be recommended by July, 2015.

- **Advised consultant and project management lead of issues within the regional planning area.**

This indicator was not met as no consultant had been selected.

Objective 2015-16: By March 31, 2016, the committee will have overseen and facilitated the development of the North East Avalon's regional land use plan.

Indicator:

- The committee advised the consultant and project management lead of issues within the regional planning area through participation in preparation of the Public Engagement Strategy, Municipal Workshops and Working Sessions.
- Review and select planning alternatives as presented by the consultant.
- Review and approve the consultant's deliverables at each of the five phases of the project.

4.0 Opportunities and Challenges

4.1 Opportunities:

The North East Avalon is the most densely populated area in the province with a population of over 200,000. It is an area that has experienced significant growth of the past decade and this growth is expected to continue. Consistency in land use and development policies will enhance the region's ability to transition during times of population change.

The North East Avalon region is a provincial service centre. Economic opportunities in other areas of the province such as mining, oil development and tourism both rely on and benefit the North East Avalon Region. Consistency in land use and development policies will reduce regulatory requirements for businesses wishing to set up or expand across municipal borders thereby encouraging continued economic development for all community partners.

4.2 Challenge:

While the North East Avalon has a history of cooperative service sharing arrangements the Committee remains cognizant of each resident's commitment to place and community.