



Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat
Executive Council
Activity Report 2010-11



Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for the Provincial Council, I hereby submit the annual activity report for the 2010-11 fiscal year. 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.

In the past year, Provincial Council submitted a Regional Collaboration advice document to government. The council spent the majority of the year preparing a provincial land use planning citizen engagement event which focussed on deliberative dialogue. The purpose of this day was to consider and deliberate on the current status of land use planning in Newfoundland and Labrador with emphasis on generating ideas about how to improve and advance it. Approximately 75 participants from a variety of backgrounds from across the province spent the day discussing land use planning in the province. The council reviewed the information received during this event as well as regional council input received to develop an advice document to be submitted to government in the 2011-12 year.

In addition, the council continued its work on food security, green issues, and the voluntary and non-profit sector. Council engaged with government, community and regional councils to become educated on initiatives happening within the province

Over the past three years, council has developed a strong foundation to develop regional and rural priorities with enhanced communication and interaction with regional councils. Through research and citizen engagement, regional and rural priorities are informed by government, community and regional councils.

Our previous experience and efforts have allowed us to define a process for information sharing, collaboration and citizen engagement. We will continue this approach as we move forward to meeting the commitments to government in 2011-14 planning period.

Sincerely,



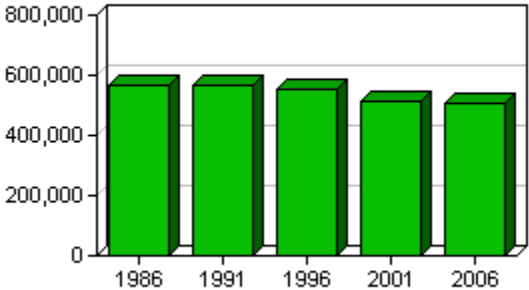
Sheila Kelly-Blackmore
Chair
Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat

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1. Provincial Overview

Population



The 2006 Census population for Newfoundland and Labrador was 505,470. This represents a decline of 1.5% since 2001.

The 2006 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in Newfoundland and Labrador was \$22,900. For Canada, it was \$28,900 in 2006. After tax personal income per capita, adjusted for inflation, was \$14,900 for Newfoundland and Labrador in 2006.

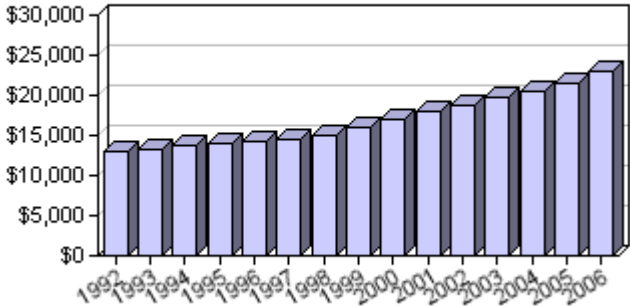
Half of the couple families in Newfoundland and Labrador had incomes of more than \$56,500 in 2006.

Half of the lone-parent families in Newfoundland and Labrador had incomes of less than \$25,300 in 2006.

According to the 2006 Census, in Newfoundland and Labrador 78.7% of homes were owned versus rented compared to 68.4% for Canada.

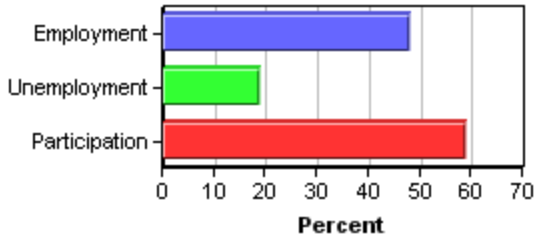
According to the 2001 Census, the average value of dwellings in Newfoundland and Labrador was \$76,285. The Canadian average

Personal Income Per Capita



was \$162,710 in 2001. In Newfoundland and Labrador, in 2001, 78.2% of homes were owned versus rented compared to 65.6% for Canada. The 2006 self-reliance ratio for Newfoundland and Labrador was 78.5%. 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. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio.

**Labour Market Rates
Population 15 and Older
(May 2006)**

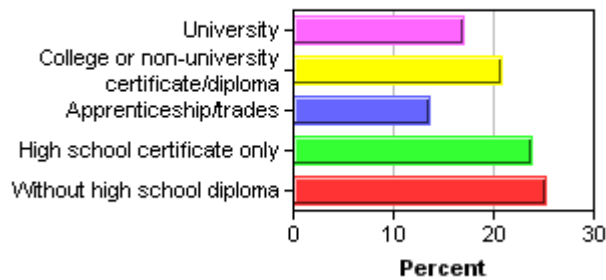


The unemployment rate for May 2006 for people aged 15 and older was 18.6%. The employment rate for the entire year 2005 for those aged 15 and older was 63.3%.

The number of individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador who received Income Support Assistance at some point in the year 2008 was 50,005. The 1991 figure was 93,025.

The total number of children ages 0 to 17 in Newfoundland and Labrador who were in families on Income Support Assistance in 2008 was 13,575. The figure for 1991 was 35,735.

Highest Level of Education, Pop 18 to 64



Census 2006 reported 25.1% of people 18 to 64 years of age in Newfoundland and Labrador do not have a high school diploma.

In Newfoundland and Labrador about 15.1% of people aged 25 to 54 had a Bachelor's Degree or higher in 2006.

In 2006, in Newfoundland and Labrador, 85.4% of people 25 to 34 years of age had at least a high

school diploma. This compares to 89.1% for Canada.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2005, 64.5% of individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador rated their health status from very good to excellent. 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. Provincial Council Overview

The Provincial Council is comprised of 14 members; seven female and seven male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the province, including ten members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met four times in 2010-11.

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.

Provincial Council members	Community
Chair	
Sheila Kelly-Blackmore	Sandy Cove
At-Large Members	
Donna Butt	Trinity
Penelope Rowe	St. John's
Ernest Simms	St. Anthony
Kara Snow	St. Anthony
Regional Representatives	
Deborah Armstrong (Grand Falls-Windsor-Baie Verte-Harbour Breton) Alternate: David Hayashida	Grand Falls-Windsor King's Point
James Farrell (Labrador) Alternate: Lori O'Brien	Wabush L'Anse au Loup
Nadine Decker (Gander-NewWesValley) Alternate: David Regular	Fogo Island Summerford
Michael Graham (Burin Peninsula) Alternate: Vacant	Burin
Colleen Kennedy (Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour) Alternate: Don Downer	Rocky Harbour Corner Brook
Ted Lewis (St. Anthony-Port au Choix) Alternate: Gloria Toope	Croque Plum Point
Kerry Murray (Avalon Peninsula) Alternate: Maureen Sullivan	Conception Bay South Calvert
Calvin White (Stephenville-Port aux Basques) Alternate: Eric Legge	Flat Bay Cartyville
Merv Wiseman (Clarenville-Bonavista) Alternate: Marilyn Coles-Hayley	North Harbour Elliston

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

3. Mandate

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 affect Provincial and Regional sustainability.

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 Provincial Council include the Rural Secretariat, the Regional Councils of the Rural Secretariat, Cabinet and Deputy Ministers and the Provincial Government.

The council also engages with officials of departments and agencies of the Provincial Government as well as individuals, groups and organizations in the province.

7. Vision

The Provincial Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat:

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

Through its work, the council has identified priorities that contribute to regional sustainability which considers economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects. The council achieved this by researching priorities and conducting citizen engagement in the development of advice documents for submission to the Provincial Government.

8. Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the Provincial Council. It represents the four-year objectives which the council worked towards as they moved forward on the strategic directions of the Provincial Government, as stated in the 2008-11 Activity Plan. The council worked to successfully strengthen the relationship with Regional Councils and other stakeholders in an effort to increase two-way communications. In addition, the council identified and focused on key priorities to enhance a clearer understanding of those priorities.

The mission statement of the council is as follows:

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

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

Indicators	Accomplishments
Common regional and rural opportunities and challenges are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2008-09, the council reviewed the 2008-11 Activity Plans for each regional council in order to identify regional differences and commonalities to be considered in their deliberations. The council also looked at rural policy issues raised by other stakeholders for consideration by government. As a result, council identified common regional and rural opportunities and challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seniors/elder care ○ Youth retention (e.g., debt forgiveness/reduction; mentorship; internship; apprenticeship) ○ Integrated land use planning ○ Access to capital to support enterprise start-up and growth in rural areas (a comprehensive program) ○ How to improve (transportation) access

Indicators	Accomplishments
	and be less vulnerable to ferry/air transporters (a fixed link?)
Regional and rural priorities are considered in the discussion of provincial priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council solicited input and feedback from regional councils on food security; land use planning; and regional collaboration. • Council engaged government departments and community stakeholders in identifying regional and rural priorities through such mechanisms as interviews, presentations, and small group discussions. Approximately 40 interviews were conducted with a range of economic, municipal, social and municipal stakeholders and four regional roundtables were held. • Council conducted and reviewed research pertaining to areas such as regionalism, land use planning, and food security. • The information, input and feedback received was considered in the deliberations of council on the above issues.
Meetings are held with Cabinet and the Deputy Ministers' Committee on Regional Development to provide input and advice on regional and rural priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council met with Cabinet in November 2007 and has met with several Ministers individually since that time. Council has not met with the Deputy Ministers Committee due to time constraints and meeting scheduling.

Discussion of results: The Provincial Council has met its mission. Council reviewed the 2008-11 Activity Plans for each regional council and identified regional commonalities and differences. Through this review, the council determined that there were other issues important to regional sustainability that were not specifically identified by regional councils. In addition, the council also considered rural policy issues raised by other stakeholders for consideration by government. The Provincial Council solicited input and feedback from regional councils for advice documents to be submitted to government. Overall, with the resources available and the number of times council was able to meet, they are pleased with the work completed and feel they have developed a common understanding of the province's economic, social, cultural and environmental realities, as well as regional commonalities and differences.

9. Report on Performance

In its 2008-11 Activity Plan the Provincial Council identified two goals. The activities and performance of the council with respect to each of the goals are supportive 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.

9.1 Issue 1: Regionalism and Partnership Development

In advance of submitting input to government regarding how best to advance and support *regional collaboration* in this province, the Provincial Council wanted to better understand: how groups, agencies, businesses, and government departments collaborate; how this experience compared to experiences in other jurisdictions; impediments to effective collaboration; factors underpinning effective collaboration (i.e., best practices); and regional or rural development stakeholder perceptions about appropriate roles for government(s) in terms of advancing and supporting effective collaboration practice. On the basis of this and other available information, the Provincial Council developed and submitted policy advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

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

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

Indicators	Accomplishments
Position paper developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council submitted an advice document on Regional Collaboration to the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat in May 2010.
Meetings are held with government and community stakeholders to advance concepts of regionalism and partnership development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2008-09, the council contracted an external consultant to review regional collaboration experiences and practices in the province and to conduct a jurisdictional review as a start to determining how other jurisdictions approach and support regional collaboration. The consultant conducted approximately 40 interviews with a range of economic, municipal, social and municipal stakeholders and held four regional roundtables. A partial jurisdictional review was completed, using

	<p>information from four Canadian provinces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key themes identified in meetings held with government and community stakeholders included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership and champions ○ The process and engaging stakeholders ○ Effective and consistent communications ○ Common vision and shared goals ○ Developing trust and building relationships ○ Decision making ○ Building confidence and early wins ○ Patience and timelines ○ Responsibility / Accountability • In May 2010, the council met with the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat whereby it was acknowledged that the Minister received the advice document on regional collaboration.
<p>Specific opportunities to advance regionalism and partnership development are identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2009-10, the council obtained input and feedback from 40 stakeholders throughout the province and regional councils. An analysis of the input and feedback collected indicated there were four common areas in discussing regional collaboration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership ○ Facilitation ○ Financial and Human Resources ○ Government Support • In 2009-10, the Provincial Council developed an advice document to be submitted to government. The advice document outlined a number of specific opportunities including enhancing and supporting regional collaboration by fostering a Culture of Collaboration within and outside of Government which supports Regional and Rural Priorities. Other areas identified as opportunities for consideration by government

	included: (i) Rural Secretariat to be consulted in the development of collaboration tools, techniques and practice within government; (ii) develop and publicize a Rural Strategy and be accountable for it, in partnership with the Rural Secretariat through collaboration and citizen engagement. Link a business model to implement the strategy; (iii) government to look at its internal structure and see how it is measuring up with respect to regional collaboration.
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Discussion of results: The Provincial Council is pleased with the work it has done around the issue of regionalism and partnership development and it has met its goal for 2011. By reviewing provincial research, conducting a jurisdictional analysis and engaging Regional Councils and community stakeholders to identify the opportunities and challenges around regional collaboration within the province, the council was able to provide a well-informed advice document to government.

2010-11 Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Provincial Council will have worked with government and community stakeholders to identify specific regional and local opportunities to advance a regionalism and partnership development agenda

Measure: Regional Collaboration advice document submitted to government. Conduct community engagement, including government and community, to identify regional and local opportunities with respect to Regional Collaboration.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2010-11
Regional Collaboration advice document submitted to government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council submitted an advice document to the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat on regional collaboration.
Engagement sessions with government and community are held.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council did not conduct additional engagement sessions on the topic of regional collaboration as it had obtained the information needed through work completed in 2008-10 (for details please see the goal section above).
Feedback documented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no feedback to document. Engagement sessions were not held due to the council's belief that it had sufficient input and feedback from various stakeholders, including community and regional councils, to develop and finalize its advice document on regional collaboration to the Provincial Government. Council realized it had the

Indicator	Accomplishments 2010-11
	<p>information needed through engagement sessions and regional councils in 2009-10 and the work of the external consultant (contracted in 2008-09) to advise its regional collaboration advice document.</p>
<p>Identify ways to advance regional collaboration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From an analysis of the input and feedback collected from 2008-10, the council identified four common areas in discussing regional collaboration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leadership ○ Facilitation ○ Financial and Human Resources ○ Government Support • The Provincial Council identified a number of specific measures which could also be included in enhancing and supporting regional collaboration. The broad areas identified are related to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fostering a ‘culture of collaboration’ within and outside government ○ Support for regional and rural priorities • Key policy themes outlined in the advice document under Fostering a Culture of Collaboration within and outside of government included: (i) government to lead by example in collaborative processes; (ii) develop collaboration tools and techniques to be utilized by government departments; (iii) provide education and awareness on collaboration tools and techniques; (iv) provide incentives for collaboration – financial and human resource; (v) identify themes of practice that promote leadership and collaboration; (vi) government to create a sense of collaboration by bringing its own people together to address issues from the local level and; (vii) develop policies and communication around collaboration whereby government departments have evidence of collaboration within their initiatives/ proposals • Key policy themes outlined in Support for Regional and Rural Priorities include: (i) develop a Knowledge Management Policy to improve information sharing within and among government departments, agencies, and citizens; (ii) engage the expertise of citizens and professionals when developing policies and programs affecting rural Newfoundland and Labrador (for example

Indicator	Accomplishments 2010-11
	Rural Secretariat Regional Councils and/or Provincial Council) and report back to the citizens; (iii) government to utilize social networking tools to share information and interact with one another and; (iv) establish best practice models to collaboration and implement within government departments.

Discussion of results: Council has met its 2010-11 objective of providing input and advice to the Provincial Government. Although the Provincial Council did not hold additional engagement sessions around the issue of regional collaboration in 2010-11, it feels that this work was completed in prior years. The Provincial Council worked with community stakeholders to identify challenges and opportunities to advance regional collaboration throughout the province. The Provincial Council solicited advice from regional councils and used a variety of other engagement mechanisms such as stakeholder interviews and primary and secondary research to obtain input and feedback for Provincial Council to consider in developing its regional collaboration advice document. Overall, the council is satisfied with the work it completed to meet the 2010-11 objective.

9.2 Issue 2: Focused dialogue with government, in the context of Regional Council work on specific regional and rural policy and developmental priorities

The Provincial Council is comprised of representatives of regional councils as well as sector representatives. While working on identifying the importance of regionalism, it recognized that the voice of regional councils can be strengthened through the work of the Provincial Council.

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

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

Indicators	Accomplishments
Regional and rural priorities to advance regional sustainability are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2008-09, council reviewed the 2008-11 Activity Plans for each regional council with a view to identifying common issues across regions. Through its work in understanding regionalism and partnership development, the council also considered rural policy issues raised by other stakeholders for consideration by government in identifying priority areas

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>for Provincial Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through a review of Regional Council Activity Plans and issues raised by other stakeholders, the Provincial Council identified seven broad policy areas: (i) Regionalism; (ii) Land use planning; (iii) Transportation – access and infrastructure; (iv) Food security/green issues; (v) Access to capital – SME and voluntary sector/non-profit; (vi) Seniors/health care and; (vii) Citizen engagement in community adjustment processes. • From 2008-11, the council established working groups for five of the topic areas to determine specific policy issues it wishes to address with the Provincial Government. The five topic areas are as follows: regionalism; land use planning; food security; green issues and voluntary and non-profit sector. In 2008-09, regionalism and land use planning were active working groups. In 2009-10, food security, green issues and voluntary and non-profit sector became active working groups.
<p>Meetings are held with government, Regional Councils and community stakeholders to advance identified regional and rural priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 2009-11, the Provincial Council engaged with regional councils in providing input and advice on land use planning, regional collaboration and food security. • Council organized and facilitated presentations and meetings with various government departments, community organizations and regional councils on initiatives they were engaged in with respect to one of the following areas: land use planning; regionalism; food security; green issues; and the voluntary and non-profit sector. These presentations and discussions educated and informed Provincial Council members as they deliberated the five working areas of focus

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>for the council (regionalism; land use planning; food security; green issues; and the voluntary and on profit sector).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2009-10, the council met with the Northeast Avalon Regional Plan Committee and the Humber Valley Regional Authority. They received a presentation from both which focused on land use planning, the process that each embarked upon, recommendations, and suggested policy implications. This informed the council on initiatives that were being undertaken by other groups in the province around land use planning and identified possible ways for the Provincial Council to engage stakeholders • In 2009-10, the council met with the Department of Environment and Conservation to discuss how land use planning is done within the province which also included a discussion on the two pilot areas: Northeast Avalon and Humber Valley. • In November 2010, the council conducted a provincial land use planning citizen engagement session with approximately 75 participants from nine regions. Stakeholder representatives from a variety of sectors, organizations, professions and regions of the province participated in the event. • In 2009-10, the council conducted a citizen engagement session with members of the Federation of Agriculture at their Annual General Meeting to solicit input and feedback on the draft food security guiding principles. There were approximately 120 individuals present. In addition to members of the Federation of Agriculture, representatives from community groups and government departments also participated. The information collected was reviewed by the

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>working group on food security and presented back to the Provincial Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2010-11, the council met with the Department of Health and Community Services to discuss initiatives which focused on examples within government and government supported food security initiatives.
<p>Specific opportunities are identified to advance the implementation of identified regional and rural priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and feedback received from regional councils, government departments and stakeholders on Provincial Council initiatives were analysed, discussed and deliberated at the council table and taken into consideration as it refined its recommendations to government.

Discussion of Results: The Provincial Council is satisfied that it met its 2008-11 goal of engaging with the Provincial Government to advance specific common regional and rural priorities in the context of a regionalism and partnership agenda. Council has been educated in their deliberations through engagement with government, community and Regional Councils. The Provincial Council used the information gathered to provide well-informed advice to government on regional and rural priorities.

2010-11 Objective: By March 31, 2011, the Provincial Council will have worked with government and community stakeholders to identify specific regional and local opportunities to advance common regional and rural priorities

Measure: Conduct engagement sessions, including government and community, to identify regional and local opportunities to advance priorities

Indicator	Accomplishments 2010-11
<p>Engagement sessions including government and community are conducted</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council conducted a provincial land use planning citizen engagement session with approximately 75 participants from nine regions across the province. Stakeholder representatives from a variety of sectors, organizations, professions and regions of the province participated in the event. Through small group discussions individuals had the opportunity to raise and discuss land use planning issues of importance to them. Participants shared ideas and deliberated on a variety of land use planning issues and

Indicator	Accomplishments 2010-11
	<p>challenges. They deliberated in small groups using open-ended questions related to the theme of land use planning. Each small group had a facilitator and a recorder. Using networked laptops, all qualitative responses emerging from the tables were sent, in real time, to a theme team. Using voter keypads, participants selected those themes they believed most important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial Council used information from this session and all nine regional councils to develop a draft land use planning advice document to government. • Council solicited input and feedback from regional councils on the food security background paper. Five of the nine regional councils have provided input and feedback on the issue of food security. Due to time constraints and meeting schedules, some regional councils were unable to provide feedback in fiscal year 2010-11. • Council engaged and received a presentation from Department of Health and Community Services on initiatives which focussed on examples within government and government supported food security initiatives.
Feedback documented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback was gathered and documented at a citizen engagement session held with a variety of sectors, organizations, professions and from input solicited from regional councils. This feedback has been considered in the development of the draft land use planning advice document to be submitted to government in 2011-12 fiscal year. • Feedback was gathered and documented from five regional councils on the issue of food security. The information will be considered by Provincial Council as it develops its advice document to government on food security.
Identify ways to advance regional and local opportunities to advance priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council felt that it needed to become aware and educated on food security initiatives that were being undertaken by government in order to identify ways to advance regional and local opportunities. The council received a presentation from Health and Community Services on government food security initiatives which focused on examples from within government, as well as, government supported food security initiatives throughout the province.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2010-11
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council felt that it needed to become aware and educated on the green economy in order to identify ways to advance regional and local opportunities. The council received a presentation on the Leader program. The presentation included the benefits of green jobs and the Leader approach that is used in Ireland. • The council felt that it needed to become aware and educated on the Voluntary and Non-Profit Secretariat to advance its discussions on the voluntary and non-profit sector. The council met with the Minister Responsible for the Voluntary and Non-Profit Secretariat. The following points were highlighted during the discussion and presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This initiative was a government commitment; ○ Sessions were held throughout the province and the Rural Secretariat was utilized to help facilitate sessions; ○ A website was designed to promote information about grants and other initiatives within the Provincial Government; ○ The U-Rock Awards were launched in January 2010 for individuals under 30. There were over 64 applicants and seven individuals and one group received an award; and ○ A volunteer summit was held in Corner Brook which brought together people from every part of the province. At the Summit, the Secretariat received directions on where to go and what to do to address the issues and challenges of the Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector. As well, a communication strategy is being developed on promoting volunteerism. • The council did not identify ways to advance regional and local opportunities to advance priorities due to time constraints. The council felt that it needed to become aware and educated on initiatives before identifying ways to advance regional and local opportunities.

Discussion of results: Council has completed work towards meeting its 2010-11 objective. It has undertaken initiatives and has been informed and educated on various government initiatives pertaining to food security and the voluntary and non-profit sector. The council has solicited input and advice from community stakeholders and regional councils through various forms of citizen engagement to advance regional and local priorities. The council has been contemplating the feedback it has received in relation to the priorities of land use planning, food security, green economy, and the voluntary and non-profit sector and are considering how to best proceed with this objective as they move forward. Unfortunately, in developing the above indicators council did not realize the amount of time it would take to become sufficiently informed on these areas. As such, council has not yet been able to adequately identify specific regional and local opportunities to advance common regional and rural priorities in relation to land use planning, food security, green economy and the voluntary non-profit sector.

10. 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. It 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 the province and to identifying policies and programs to encourage desired change. The challenge for council, given the range of issues, perspectives, interests and needs within the province, is to reach consensus on priorities for change and on policy advice to provide to government. The opportunity for council is to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body within the province 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 Newfoundland and Labrador.

Regional collaboration

The 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 the province's sustainability. The challenge for council is to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body within the province that can advance collaboration. There are two opportunities for council. First, it can position itself as a broad-based and cross-sectoral advisory body that can lead, participate and/or support collaboration across a range of sectors, communities and interests. Second, as a broad-based advisory body, it can identify the various supports necessary to foster collaboration and be a conduit for advice to government to advance efforts.

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, among others, economic development, environmental protection, social policy advancement and municipal governance. The challenge for the council is to clearly and effectively communicate its mandate and role to stakeholders and sectors, and to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body that can assist them. The opportunity for the council, through new and strengthened relationships with stakeholders, is to ensure that a broad range of perspectives are considered as it identifies priorities, provides advice to government and fosters collaboration.

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

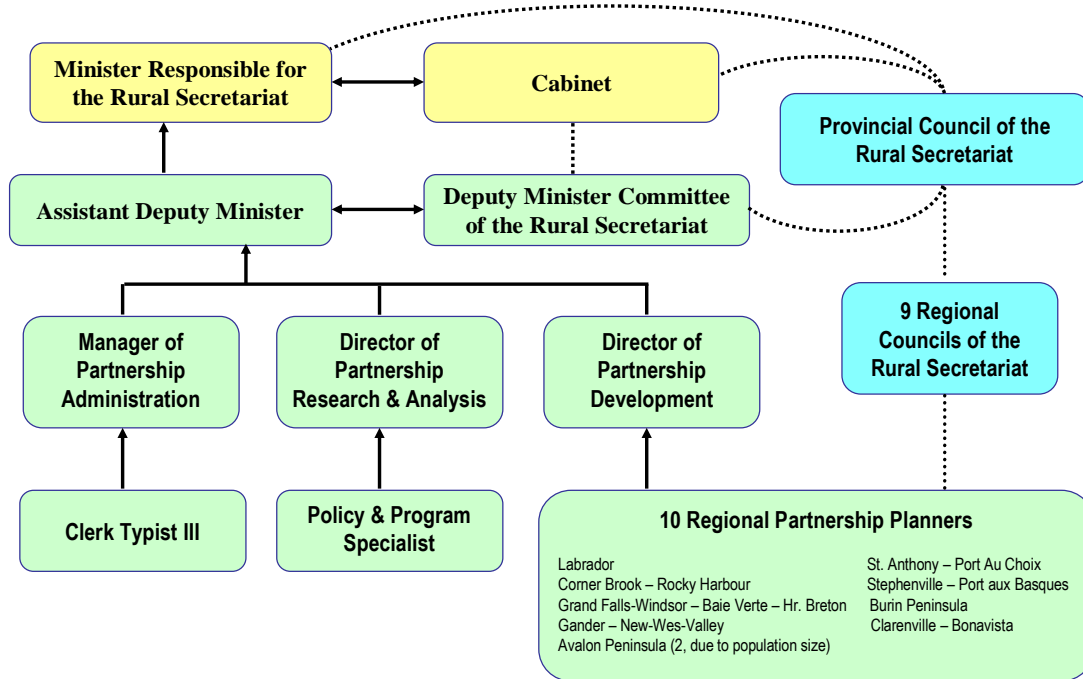
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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

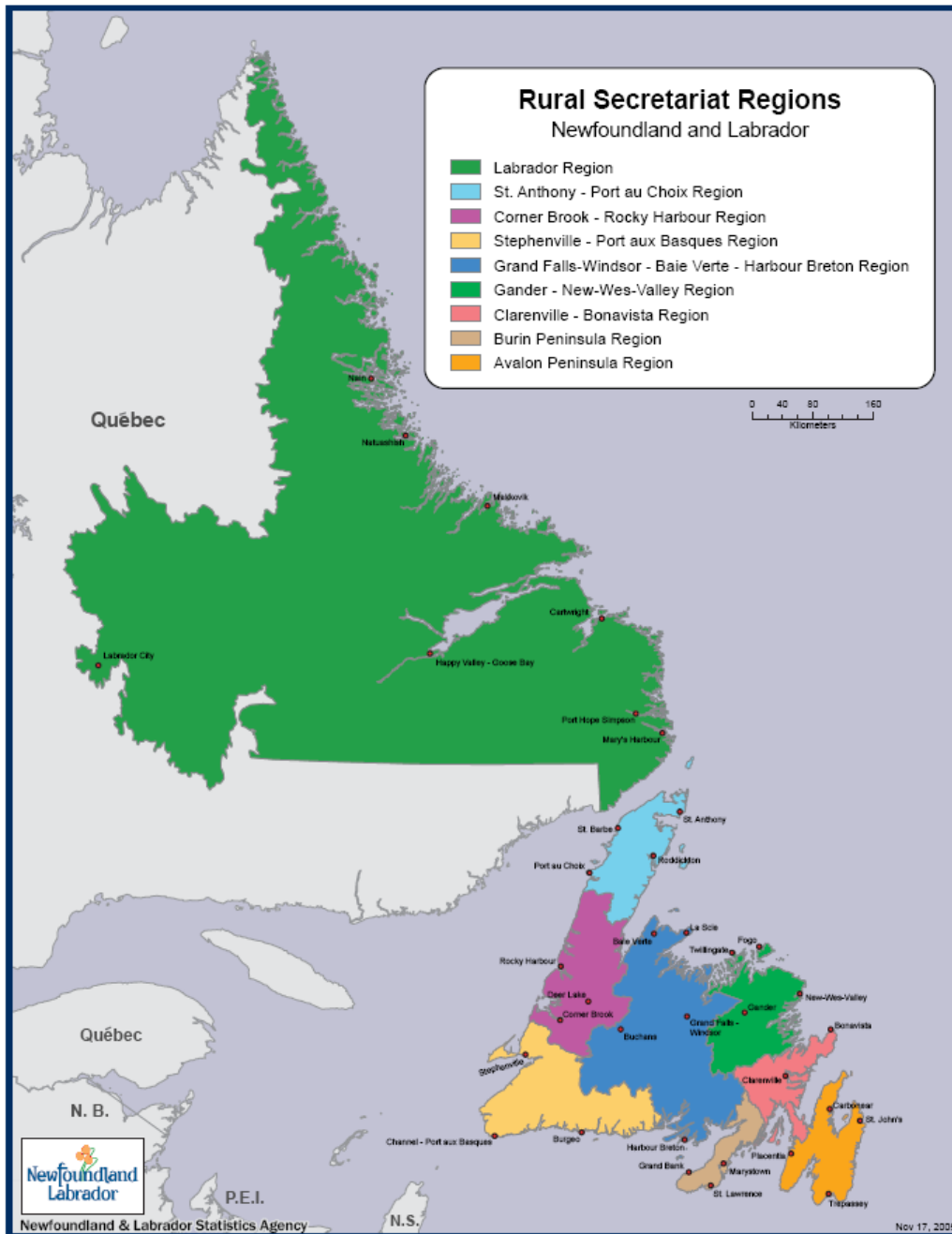
- Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy

Appendix B: Organizational Structure

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions



Appendix D: Mandate of Rural Secretariat and Regional Councils

Mandate of the Rural Secretariat

The Rural Secretariat's mandate is to:

- Promote the well-being of all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador through a comprehensive and coordinated approach to economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of regional development.
- Act as the focal point for government to work with local and regional partners to build strong and dynamic regions and communities.
- Ensure that regional concerns are considered throughout the provincial government and promoted at the federal level.
- Carry out research and analysis of economic and social issues affecting all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Help communities and regions identify and take advantage of growth opportunities.

Mandate of the Regional Councils of the Rural Secretariat

The Regional Council's mandate is to:

- 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.

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Rural Secretariat