

2014-15

Regional Councils & Provincial
Council of the Rural Secretariat



Annual
Report



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1. INTRODUCTION

Established in October 2012, the Office of Public Engagement (OPE) brought together a number of existing entities and programs of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, including the Rural Secretariat. Despite this reorganization, the mandates of the Regional Councils and the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat have not changed. The Councils continue to enhance public engagement through the provision of policy advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on issues of importance to their respective regions and the province. Councils are comprised of citizens from both large and small communities throughout their region, and are gender balanced. The OPE is working to broaden Council membership with a particular focus on youth, business and labour members.

This is the first activity report of the 2014-17 planning cycle. It highlights the activities that the nine Regional Councils and Provincial Council have undertaken to achieve their objectives. Previous Council plans, reports and a listing of advice submissions are available online at <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/index.html>.

2. MANDATES

The mandate of Regional Councils 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;
- To identify policies and programs which either a) advance b) negatively impact or c) need to be developed to encourage the necessary change;
- 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; and,
- To select an individual to represent the region on 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 the province;
- To review key provincial economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, employment insurance usage, economic diversity) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change;
- 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;
- To advance cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic and social measures, and to encourage the Provincial Government and community partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates; and,
- To serve as an external sounding board for Provincial Government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will affect provincial and regional sustainability.

3. VISION

Vibrant rural regions and communities where collaborative organizations and engaged and informed citizens work closely with governments to advance rural sustainability.

Through their work, Councils identify priorities that contribute to regional sustainability which consider economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

4. AVALON PENINSULA REGIONAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council, I respectfully submit the annual Activity Report based on the 2014-15 fiscal year. The period of time covered by this report extends from April 1, 2014 through to March 31, 2015. On behalf of Avalon Council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the Council's accountability for the results reported.

For the year covering this report Avalon Council prepared and submitted recommendations to Government in response to the *Expression of Interest* released by Government to attract candidates to serve on regional councils. In particular, Avalon Council focused on the criteria to be considered by Government when selecting candidates for the Avalon Regional Council. Avalon Council is confident the recommendations submitted will lead to improving the Council appointment process.

Throughout the year Council members also participated in engagement activities providing insights and input into the Open Government Initiative as well as the regional Primary Health Care Forums and the Premier's Summit on Primary Health Care.

The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will continue its commitment to a collaborative approach to developing sound policy advice and welcomes every opportunity to communicate with, and respond to, any questions posed by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Sincerely,



Des Linehan
Chair, Avalon Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

4.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was 257,655. This represents a 5.5 per cent increase over the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region¹ there were 123,210 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 13,000 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was \$31,800, up from \$25,100 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was 85.5 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 26,615. The 2007 figure was 30,030. There were 21,210 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 25,575 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region, 51,785 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 119,535 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 17.6 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in the Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent while 45.6 per cent rated it as very good. For the province, about 16.2 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 per cent as very good.

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

¹ There was a 30.6% global non-response rate in the Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

4.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council was comprised of 11 members – seven male and four female. The Council has representation from both large and small communities throughout the region, including members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The Council met four times in 2014-15.

Regional Council members	Community
Des Linehan (Chair)	Placentia
John Adams	Harbour Grace
Paul Connors	Mount Pearl
Lorelei Dean	Holyrood
Sheila Lee	Riverhead, St. Mary's Bay
Jay McGrath	Mount Pearl
Betty Moore	Clarke's Beach
Kerry Murray (Provincial Council Representative)	Topsail
Maureen Sullivan	Calvert
Brendan White	Northern Bay
Dave Woodman	Harbour Main

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

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council spent approximately \$2,620 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs two Regional Partnership Planners in this region, who among other duties, act as an information resource for the Council and facilitate the Council meetings. The regional offices are located in Dunville (Employment Center) and Carbonear (College of the North Atlantic campus).

4.3 Report on Performance

In its 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. The activities and performance of the Council with respect to this objective, as outlined below, align with the Council's mandate and support the Provincial Government's strategic direction (Appendix A). The Council is committed to continuing its public engagement and collaboration efforts to help inform its advice to government on issues important to the region.

This is the first annual report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each year of the plan.

Issue: Provide advice to the Provincial Government

Agencies, boards and commissions provide advice to government, deliver services, and regulate key sectors of the economy. They function at arms-length from government departments and undertake important work on behalf of the people of the province. In December 2014, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador issued a public call for expressions of interest from individuals who would like to serve on the Rural Secretariat Regional Councils. The Regional Councils, including the Avalon, had vacancies for membership and saw this as an opportunity to provide input into the criteria for selecting successful candidates to the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council. The Council believes that better representation of civil society is critical in balancing equity and presenting a more inclusive approach when gathering input and providing advice to Government.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government	As a result of the public call for members through an <i>Expressions of Interest</i> process, and in an effort to enrich the appointment process, the Council felt it was timely to submit their collective thoughts and ideas on some potential selection criteria for membership to the Councils.
Researched and/or discussed issue	<p>The Council met with the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement to discuss appointments to the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council. Subsequently, the Minister invited Council members to submit names for consideration and suggestions for criteria in selecting individuals.</p> <p>In order to become more informed about the recruitment and selection activities and processes undertaken in recent years for Council membership, the Council reviewed, in detail, the <i>Government Appointment Process</i> advice document submitted to Government by the Provincial Council in 2011 and the</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>recent follow-up submission from the Provincial Council entitled, <i>Recruitment and Selection Process: Advice for Regional Council Expression of Interest</i>. Finally, Council considered their own efforts and attempts in recent years, at the request of Government, to identify and encourage individuals to present themselves as potential Council members and Government's response to those efforts.</p> <p>As Government was in receipt of nominations from community members, the recommendations that Council put forward are more specifically aligned with criteria that they felt should be used in the selection process undertaken in appointing members to serve on Regional Councils, particularly the Avalon. In order to achieve this, it was recommended that consideration should be given to the following categories/populations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigrant (with Government emphasis on population growth and labour market demands for the Avalon, Council felt having such an individual would be instrumental in supporting a more diverse perspective); • Youth (this representative should be deemed as youth for at least a two-year period from the time of appointment); • Gender (currently, gender equity on the Avalon Council is acceptable and provides a balanced mix of perspectives. The Council suggests that Government ensure this balance continues as new appointments are made); • Person with Disability (while Council has made every effort to be aware of the needs of all when considering policy recommendations, it would certainly be advantageous to be more inclusive); • Region (location should be considered when selecting appointees to ensure there is representation from all areas of the Avalon). <p>Additionally, the Council would like to see a process established to effectively address the weakness created within Regional Councils when members miss at least three consecutive meetings without reasonable explanation.</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement	The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council submitted an advice letter to the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement in December 2014.

Discussion of Results

The Council has met its objective of providing advice to the Provincial Government. The Council chose to focus its advice on the selection criteria for appointment to the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council. Through various discussions and deliberations, the Council came to a consensus on advice to submit to government for consideration. The Council submitted this advice to the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement in December 2014.

5. CLARENVILLE - BONAVISTA REGIONAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for the Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council, I hereby submit the Activity Report for the 2014-15 fiscal year. The period of time covered by this report extends from April 1, 2014 through to March 31, 2015. 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.

We continue to be proud of the dedication and efforts of the members of the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council. In 2014-15, we hosted six meetings in our effort to gain a better understanding of the issues impacting this region.

In September 2014, Council concluded its review and analysis of the Provincial Population Growth Strategy and submitted a set of policy recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Minister Kent has indicated a desire to renew council membership and we look forward to the outcome of this process. Council members had the opportunity to engage the Minister on this matter during a meeting in November 2014.

In March 2015, we finalized our work on Assessing the Factors Impacting the Sustainability of the Clarenville-Bonavista Region- Phases One and Two. We are very appreciative of Dr. Kelly Vodden, Memorial University of Newfoundland-Grenfell Campus and researcher, Mr. Stephen Holisko, for their efforts to support our research and public engagement processes which assisted Council in finalizing its policy advice recommendations for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Our Regional Planner, Colin Holloway, is worthy of our thanks for so ably coordinating these activities once again this year.

Sincerely,



Janet Fay Matthews

Chair

Clarenville - Bonavista Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

5.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the Clarenville – Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region was 28,255. This represents a 1.4 per cent decrease from the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Clarenville – Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region² there were 10,285 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 2,910 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the Clarenville - Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region was \$25,400, up from \$20,600 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900, and for Canada it was \$31,600.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the Clarenville – Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region was 73.6 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the Clarenville – Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 6,890. The 2007 figure was 7,725. There were 1,955 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 2,585 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Clarenville – Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region, 5,455 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 9,535 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 17.4 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in the Clarenville – Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent while 45.1 per cent rated it as very good. For the province, about 16.2 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 per cent as very good.

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

² There was a 41.2% global non-response rate in the Clarenville – Bonavista Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

5.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council was comprised of seven members; four female and three male. All Council members represent communities of less than 5,000 people. The Council met five times in 2014-15.

Regional Council members	Community
Janet Fay Matthews (Chairperson)	Arnold's Cove
Marilyn Coles-Hayley	Elliston
Darryl Johnson	Trinity Bay North
Violet Parsons	Bloomfield
Barry Pearce	Port Rexton
Edith Samson	Trinity Bay North
Mervin Wiseman (Provincial Council Representative)	North Harbour

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

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council spent approximately \$2,190 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs a Regional Partnership Planner in this region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the Council and facilitates their meetings. The regional office is located in Clarenville (co-located with the Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development).

5.3 Report on Performance

In its 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council identified one objective: *to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.* The activities and performance of the Council with respect to this objective for 2014-15, as outlined below, are in keeping with the Council's mandate, as well as support the Provincial Government's strategic direction (Appendix A). To ensure the Regional Council is properly informed and adequately prepared in developing its advice to Government, it makes use of any one of a number of tools to assist in its work. These tools often involve the use of public engagement approaches and collaborative processes with many partners including: regional community-based organizations; public educational institutions; and Federal, Provincial, and Municipal Governments.

This is the first activity report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each year of the plan.

Issue: Provide advice to the Provincial Government

Regional Councils have been asked to examine their respective regions from an environmental, economic, social and cultural perspective with a goal of enhancing the region’s future sustainability. Commencing in February 2013, the Council discussed and identified important public policy matters which its members thought should be addressed and further explored under each of the four regional sustainability pillars: social, economic, environmental and culture.

Following a lengthy deliberation process, and building on the issues identifies in February 2013, the Council settled its focus for public policy advice on two key areas which required in-depth analysis and consultation with key stakeholders:

- (1) Provincial Population Growth Strategy;
- (2) Rural, regional sustainability.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

(1) Provincial Population Growth Strategy	
Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government	The Regional Council is mandated to provide policy advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on issues impacting the future sustainability of the region. Council’s understanding of the issues impacting population growth is critical to this process.
Researched and/or discussed issue	Commencing in 2013, the Regional Council, in its preparation for providing public policy advice to the Provincial Government on the Population Growth Strategy, followed three steps: (1) review the Background document, <i>Changing Course: A Discussion Paper on Population Growth in Newfoundland and Labrador</i> ; (2) organize a Regional Population Growth and Sustainability Forum; and (3) administer a Population Growth and Sustainability Survey to residents living in the Clarenville-Bonavista region. The process of providing policy advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador required a multi-prong approach.

(1) Provincial Population Growth Strategy	
Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>Building on its work in 2013-14, Council undertook a process to analyze the data arising from the public survey as well as the Population Growth and Sustainability Forum (March 2014).</p> <p>Through a partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency and assistance from the OPE, an in-depth analysis of the data was completed between April and September 2014.</p>
Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement	<p>Understanding the complexities of population growth and sustainability requires larger amounts of time to perform primary and secondary research, engage citizens and conduct a comprehensive analysis of the results.</p> <p>Although Council initiated this work in 2013, it took two fiscal years to finalize and provide policy advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Final Report, which outlined its research and engagement approaches as well as its findings and recommendations, was completed in 2014-15. In September 2014, Council submitted the Report to the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills who is responsible for the Provincial Population Growth Strategy.</p> <p>In summary, the Report proposes that the Provincial Government consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proactively disclosing information, in a timely and accessible manner, to residents related to the cost of living among communities of the region (e.g., cost of a food basket, cost of housing, and cost of transportation). 2. Exploring the complexities of what it means to be “family friendly”. The scope of this study should take into consideration what families need and what they would like to have in or near their communities. It should also consider how service sector jobs can be more family friendly (i.e., attractive to families) as well as what level of supports are required for young families who do not have a strong support network. 3. Undertaking a comprehensive study of the social and economic impacts residents experience in rural communities. This study would identify the barriers to working in service industry jobs for people who are unemployed, especially in areas where gas and oil type employment has skewed the living wage.

(1) Provincial Population Growth Strategy	
Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Enhancing its focus on the promotion of entrepreneurship in rural regions of the Province. Through the development of a partnership with local schools and Chambers of Commerce, and building on lessons learned from successful rural-based company owners, this renewed focus could include initiatives such as business start-up, mentorship, job shadowing and succession planning. 5. Continuing to assist rural communities to develop supportive environments for immigrants. Sub-themes included in this initiative would focus on: enhancing linkages between rural and urban support networks; appreciating rural cultures; and matching immigrants to rural community values. 6. Developing a comprehensive policy which will support communities in the integration of healthy built environments (e.g., walkability, traffic calming, housing, accessibility, food security, safety, and environmental stewardship). 7. Continuing to develop a comprehensive Population Growth Strategy that focuses on all regions (urban and rural) of the Province, and is inclusive of a focus on addressing why some youth leave and why some return.

Discussion of Results

Council agrees with the four guiding themes contained in the Provincial Population Growth Strategy. Issues related to Labour Market and Employment, Family Friendly Policies and Programs, Immigration and Community Well-being all impact the Clarenville-Bonavista region. Council feels this issue is of critical importance to all Rural Secretariat regions, including the Clarenville-Bonavista region.

(2) Rural, Regional Sustainability	
Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government	<p>The Regional Council is mandated to provide policy advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on issues impacting the future sustainability of the region. Council's understanding of the factors impacting the future sustainability of the Clarenville-Bonavista Region is critical to this process.</p> <p>Council was interested in answering the following four research questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What is our definition of sustainability and what outcomes would tell us we are there (or moving in the right direction)?</i>

(2) Rural, Regional Sustainability	
Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <i>What are the key factors or characteristics necessary for sustainability in the Clarenville-Bonavista Region? What barriers exist?</i> 3. <i>How can the regional Council best proceed with determining which of these core sustainability factors currently exist in the Clarenville-Bonavista Region and what are the gaps?</i> 4. <i>Based on public input and result results, what priorities, strategies and/or policy support are necessary to assist in moving towards sustainability assessment and ultimately sustainability in the Clarenville-Bonavista Region?</i>
Researched and/or discussed issue	<p>In 2014, Council continued its efforts to develop a broader understanding of the critical social, economic, cultural and environmental factors impacting the region by assessing whether or not the Clarenville-Bonavista region was moving towards sustainability.</p> <p>Following the completion of its Phase One research on “Assessing the Factors Impacting the Sustainability for the Clarenville-Bonavista Region” in June 2014, Council commenced Phase Two in October that year.</p> <p>A copy of the Phase One Final Report can be found at: http://www.ope.gov.nl.ca/rural/whatweredoing/cbr_reports/34aClarenville-Bonavista_FinalReport(Phase1)2014.pdf</p> <p>Phase Two of the study had three components: (1) refine the set of sustainability measures and indicators applicable to the region; (2) develop and implement a household survey; (3) host Community Forums in three sub-regions; and complete a Gap Analysis on the region’s trends towards sustainability.</p> <p>The partnership with Grenfell Campus, Memorial University (reported in 2013-14) was continued. In addition, partnerships were formed with the College of the North Atlantic – Clarenville Campus and the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency to assist with the design and implementation of the Household Survey. Two hundred and ninety-nine residents living in the Clarenville-Bonavista region responded to the survey.</p> <p>In addition, through the support of the OPE, two Community Forums were held in Come-By-Chance and Trinity Bay North with a third session planned (but not executed) for Clarenville and Lethbridge.</p> <p>The issues identified in the survey as being most important to the sustainability of the region were used as discussion themes during the Community Forums. Input from the Household Survey, the Community Forums and the Gap Analysis further informed Council’s the final report and</p>

(2) Rural, Regional Sustainability	
Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>Council's policy advice recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.</p> <p>A copy of the Final Report can be found at: http://www.ope.gov.nl.ca/rural/whatweredoing/cbr_reports/34bAssessingtheFactorsImpactingtheSustainabilityoftheClarenville-BonavistaRegion_Phase2.pdf</p>
<p>Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement</p>	<p>Based on the Gap Analysis, Household survey and the public engagement processes, the Clarenville-Bonavista region is doing relatively well. In analyzing the information and data on measures and indicators, the most critical sustainability factor pertains to meeting basic needs, tackling poverty, and promoting equity. The research indicates there are six core areas which require immediate attention: (1) increasing affordable housing options; (2) stabilizing the region's population base; (3) improving access to good food and nutrition; (4) improving community connectedness; (5) improving the viability of the agricultural sector; and (6) developing a sustainable fishery.</p> <p>The advice document, which was submitted to the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement on March 31, 2015, proposed that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applying a multiple lens approach to its policy development to ensure that impacts on rural regions are lessened as much as possible. 2. Establishing an Information Broker strategy such that individuals, communities and organizations have support in navigating how and where to access data. 3. Increasing housing stock in rural regions through investments in publicly subsidized housing and implementing a rental rate control strategy. 4. Increasing investments in education, entrepreneurship and quality employment opportunities to support youth once they are ready to enter the Labour Force. 5. Establishing an Oil and Gas Fund which could ensure funding to assist individuals, communities and regions to transition from the boom of industrial development into a sustainable, more diversified future. 6. Taking steps to bridge the gap, thus strengthening emphasis on and investment in preventative care and education. 7. Developing a strategy for supporting local food networks through community planning, education and corporate sponsorship. 8. Undertaking a comprehensive review of the agricultural industry including updated valuations and the establishment of realistic goals for achieving food security in the Province.

(2) Rural, Regional Sustainability	
Indicators	Accomplishments
	9. Continuing to raise awareness (through incentives, entrepreneurship and business investment) of the importance of environmental sustainability by linking environmental health to the health and sustainability of the population.

Discussion of Results

Regional Councils are mandated to provide policy advice to the Provincial Government on issues of critical importance to the future sustainability of rural regions. Assessing the critical factors that impact rural sustainability is a complicated process but Council is committed to understanding these factors and how they impact the future of the Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat region.

The Clarenville-Bonavista region is unique in its economic diversity: tourism on the Bonavista Peninsula and oil and gas development on the Isthmus of Avalon, whereas Clarenville is a main service centre for retail and government. Despite the opportunities for economic growth, the lists of core areas requiring attention are a result of the diversity within the region.

The results from Phase Two of *Assessing the Factors Impacting the Sustainability of the Clarenville-Bonavista Region* has provided great insights for Council in formulating its policy advice for 2014-15. Additionally, these results serve as a jumping off point for Council's future work on providing advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on issues impacting this rural region.

6. BURIN PENINSULA REGIONAL COUNCIL

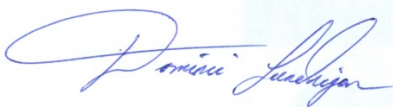
Message from the Chair

As chairperson for the Burin Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat, I cordially submit the Council's annual activity report for the 2014-15 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. The content of this report provides an overview of the Council's activities from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015 with respect to the commitments outlined in the 2014-17 Activity Plan.

On behalf of the Burin Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat, I am pleased to report another successful year of work. Over the past year, Council explored the difficulties volunteers in the region face. This work will lead to an advice document detailing our perspectives on "How Government Regulations and Red Tape are Impacting Our Volunteers". Completion of our work is taking a little longer than expected and we plan to have our document submitted by the first quarter of the new fiscal year. We felt it prudent to ensure the proper time was taken to develop sound advice before finalizing the document. In ensuring that the Council was well informed in preparing the coming submission, in addition to its own discussions and deliberations the Regional Council also undertook the development of an online questionnaire that was distributed to volunteers and volunteer groups throughout the region. Council's work on this topic has confirmed many of the assumptions it had regarding the challenges being experienced by volunteers in our region.

Council was also pleased this past year to have finalized and submitted to government its advice document on "Issues Facing Youth on the Burin Peninsula". Council is now focused on finalizing its current advice document and is looking forward yet another year of continuing to provide sound advice to the Provincial Government on issues related to regional sustainability.

Sincerely,



Dominic Lundrigan
Chairperson
Burin Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

6.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was 20,715. This represents a 4.0 per cent decrease from the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region³ there were 7,550 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 1,920 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was \$26,000 up from \$20,100 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was 73.4 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 5,260. The 2007 figure was 5,960. There were 1,695 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 2,370 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region, 3,455 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 7,485 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 35.7 per cent of individuals in Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status from very good to excellent. For the province, about 16.2 per cent of individuals rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 per cent as very good.

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

³ There was a 29.5% global non-response rate in the Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

6.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Burin Peninsula Regional Council was comprised of nine members; five male and four female. The Council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including a diverse mix of experience and backgrounds. The Council met five times and there were also several advice sub-committee meetings in 2014-15.

Regional Council members	Community
Dominic Lundrigan (Chair)	Burin
Trina Appleby	Torbay (Burin)
Jack Cumben	Grand Bank
David Babb	Grand Bank
Fred Douglas	Burin
Shirlene Edwards	Lawn
Mary McCarthy	Marystown
Harold Murphy (Provincial Council Representative)	Parker's Cove
Susan Bursey	Marystown

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

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the Burin Peninsula Regional Council spent approximately \$1,125 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs a Regional Partnership Planner in this region, who among other duties, act as an information resource for the Council and facilitates their meetings. The regional office is located in Burin (College of the North Atlantic campus).

6.3 Report on Performance

In its 2014-17 Activity Plan, Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. To ensure that the Regional Council is properly informed and adequately prepared in developing its advice to government it uses a number of tools to assist its work. In keeping with the strategic directions of the Provincial Government (Appendix A), these tools include, but are not limited to, research activities and citizen engagement which provide input into Council's policy advice document submissions.

This is the first annual report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Burin Peninsula Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each year of the plan.

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

The Regional Council has been tasked with the mandate to review and provide commentary to government on the long-term regional sustainability of the Burin Peninsula. As volunteers in the region, Council members know first-hand the important role that volunteers and volunteer organizations play in regards to the sustainability of our region. The huge impact that volunteers have on the economic and social well-being of a region is well-documented, as is the large amount of hours they give, their increasing age and the positive impact they have. The Regional Council focused its efforts, in 2014-15, on exploring and addressing the challenges volunteers face as they try to conduct their work throughout the Burin Peninsula region.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Burin Peninsula Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified by council and/or requested by the Provincial Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Regional Council members were asked to share issues they felt were impacting the future sustainability of the region/province. These suggestions then served as the basis for a Council meeting discussion where it was decided that Council would focus on the challenges volunteers experience when dealing with government regulations, red tape, programming, funding and services and recommendations for addressing these issues.
Researched and/or discussed issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In addition to its own discussions and deliberations, the Regional Council also developed an online questionnaire which was distributed to volunteers and volunteer groups throughout the region. Volunteers were asked several demographic questions about themselves and the role(s) they play in their volunteer activities as well as questions regarding their experiences with government in their volunteer work.In the initial stages of their work the Regional Council established a small working committee comprised of two Regional Council members and the Regional Planner to oversee the research and coordinate the development of the advice document.The Regional Council met several times over the year to discuss and deliberate on the findings of their work.

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All information gathered through their research/ engagement with volunteers via the online questionnaire was used by the Council to inform the creation of their advice document to government. • Due to scheduling issues (mainly due to weather during the winter months) it was late in the fiscal year before the Council was able to complete all of its analysis and discussion on the data collected from the questionnaire. As a result, the Council will continue their work into the new fiscal year to ensure it has adequately studied and deliberated the topic before submitting its final advice to government.
<p>Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the issues and reasoning noted in the previous indicator, finalized advice stemming from the work completed will not be available until the 2015-16 fiscal year. Council plans to have its advice communicated to government in 2015-16 and it will be posted online at: http://www.opec.gov.nl.ca/rural/whatweredoing/policyadvice.html

Discussion of Results

Based upon the work completed by the Burin Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat, just about all volunteer organizations have to deal with a government department or agency at some point to conduct their activities. Therefore a good working relationship with government is very important. The Council's research also revealed that the volunteer sector on the Burin Peninsula is experiencing challenges in working with government departments. It appears that people are mostly pleased with the support they receive from government but experience difficulty with the required application and reporting processes. It is the hope of the Regional Council that government gives serious consideration to the coming advice document and move forward with actions to help mitigate these challenges. In doing so, government will be assisting volunteers not just on the Burin Peninsula but across the province. The Regional Council has put an enormous amount of effort into their work this year and believes that they have compiled a thorough overview of the issues and are well on their way to developing sound advice on how to address these issues.

7. GANDER – NEW-WES-VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

As chairperson for the Gander - New-Wes-Valley Regional Council, I hereby submit the 2014-15 Annual Activity Report for the timeframe April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015. 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.

While continuing to refine and develop our vision for regional sustainability, advising Government on important issues relating to regional sustainability has and will continue to be an overall goal of Council. This year we are pleased to report another busy and productive term. Council submitted an advice letter and background document to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture which focused on the Northern Shrimp Quota and its future implications for our region's sustainability.

Throughout the year we have broadened our knowledge and engaged with government officials on a variety of issues including the Department of Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs concerning the future of our local governance structures, the Office of Public Engagement on the new Open Government Initiative, and the Canadian Coast Guard on the issues of the MV Manolis L. Additionally, Council engaged with the Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University on freshwater health in the region.

In an attempt to keep abreast of the economic, social, cultural and environmental indicators of our region's health, Council implemented an interactive, online engagement tool to reach out to citizens and stakeholders to better assess their concerns for future regional sustainability. The results of this provide important information to Council on the region's concerns, challenges and opportunities which can then be used to inform future advice and recommendations to Government regarding policies and programs.

Further to our advisory role, Council aims to continue to play a catalytic role throughout our region. Through various engagements, partnership developments and other effective communication processes, Council continues to act as a broker between regional stakeholders, community, industry, government departments and Provincial Government leaders on matters pertinent to our region's viability. As such, this will continue to be an important role for Council.

With the continued assistance, support and the dedication of our Regional Partnership Planner, Ms. Tanya Noble, and with a renewed commitment, Council looks forward to the year ahead. We will continue to support and foster a climate of communication and cooperation within our region that is essential to the region's sustainability, while providing quality advice to Government on matters relating to the future sustainability of the Gander – New-Wes-Valley region.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nadine Decker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nadine Decker, Chairperson
Gander - New-Wes-Valley Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

7.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Rural Secretariat Region was 46,275. This represents a 1.2 per cent decrease from the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Rural Secretariat Region⁴ there were 16,990 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 4,330 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Rural Secretariat Region was \$25,000 up from \$20,000 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Rural Secretariat Region was 73.8 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Rural Secretariat Region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 10,935 and the 2007 figure was 11,930. There were 3,695 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 4,345 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Rural Secretariat Region, 8,875 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 15,410 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 14.8 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent while 42.7 per cent rated it as very good. For the province, about 16.2 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 per cent as very good.

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

⁴ There was a 41.2% global non-response rate in the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

7.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Gander - New-Wes-Valley Regional Council was comprised of seven members; one female and six male. The Council met four times in 2014-15.

Regional Council members	Community
Nadine Decker (Chairperson)	Fogo Island
Arthur Bull	Gander
Rick Lackey	Twillingate
David Regular (Provincial Council Representative)	Summerford
James Snow (Alternative Provincial Council Representative)	Lewisporte
Stanley Sparkes	Glovertown
Donald J. Winsor	Eastport

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

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Regional Council spent approximately \$4,235 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs a Regional Partnership Planner in the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource and facilitates the work of the Council. The regional office is located in the municipality of New-Wes-Valley.

7.3 Report on Performance

In the 2014-17 Activity Plan, the objective of Council was to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. To ensure that the Regional Council is properly informed and adequately prepared in developing its advice to government it uses a number of tools to assist its work. In keeping with the strategic directions of the Provincial Government (Appendix A), we are committed to continuing a process of community engagement and collaboration efforts to reach out to citizens and stakeholders on important matters related to our region’s sustainability.

This is the first annual report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each year of the plan.

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

The fishery is critical to the viability and sustainability of coastal communities and the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Region as a whole. In recent years there have been significant developments in the

Northern Shrimp Fishery. Quota reductions in the shrimp fishery have negatively impacted local businesses and threaten some coastal communities.

In 2014, the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) announced quota deductions in the Northern Shrimp Fishery for both the offshore and inshore fleet sector quotas. The decision to reduce these quotas was based upon DFO science which indicated a serious decline in the biomass of shrimp in the respective fishing regions. Early in 2015, it appeared that DFO science was again indicating that a significant reduction in quotas would be required and likely carried out by DFO in the 2015 fishing season. In the event that DFO had continued with its previous formula for quota reductions, heavily weighted against the inshore fleet sector, it would likely have a devastating effect on the inshore shrimp fishery as a whole. The individual inshore fishing enterprises are primarily small enterprises based in local outport communities around the coastline and rural communities reliant on the shrimp fishery will be seriously affected.

In the Gander – New-Wes Valley Region we have two such communities, Twillingate, with the Notre Dame Seafoods shrimp plant, and Seldom, Fogo Island, with the Fogo Island Co-op shrimp plant. The lack of viability of these fishing enterprises will have serious consequences which could significantly impact the sustainability of the respective communities in a multitude of ways including: a reduction in local employment and a reduction in the use of the local supply of products and services that generate an economy in these communities. The potential ripple effect could be devastating.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Gander – New-Wes-Valley Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government</p>	<p>The Gander – New-Wes-Valley Council periodically discusses and identifies an inventory of issues relating to the sustainability of the region. Since Council’s beginning in 2005, marine resources, particularly the fishery, have been identified as being critical to the future sustainability of the region. Council has reported in previous years on different aspects of marine resources and the fishery. During Winter 2015, Council identified the Northern Shrimp Fishery Quota Allocations as an issue.</p>

<p>Researched and/or discussed issue</p>	<p>In past years, Council has researched and engaged citizens, academics and Provincial and Federal government officials regarding the provinces marine resources and fishing industry. These activities have supported past marine resource and fishery related advice that has been submitted to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture. A list of previous advice documents can be found online at: http://www.ope.gov.nl.ca/rural/whatweredoing/policyadvice.html</p> <p>In addition to the documents and resources used to inform past advice, in 2014-15, Council reviewed the following documents to gain knowledge on the northern shrimp fishery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-year Integrated Fisheries Management Plan, 2007 • Presentation to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans showing maps of processing plants. <p>Council members also increased their knowledge by informally engaging local residents and business owners involved in the shrimp fishery. During the March 6, 2015 meeting, Council discussed and updated a draft position paper on the allocation of northern shrimp.</p>
<p>Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement</p>	<p>On March 20, 2015 an advice letter and position paper “Northern Shrimp Fishery Allocation” was submitted to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.</p>

Discussion of Results

Gander – New-Wes-Valley Council has met its objective of providing advice to the Provincial Government. On March 20, 2015, Council submitted an advice letter and position paper “Northern Shrimp Fishery Allocation” to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

Management of the northern shrimp fishery is important to the economic and long-term sustainability of the Region. We believe there are a number of important factors to be considered in determining what principles and policies should be used to administer and maintain this fishery. Most importantly, stronger significance should be placed on the application of the policies of adjacency, historic dependence and economic viability.

8. GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR — BAIE VERTE — HARBOUR BRETON REGIONAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

As chairperson for the Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council, and in accordance with the Provincial Government's commitment to accountability, we submit the Regional Council's 2014-15 Activity Report. My signature below is on behalf of the entire Council, and is indicative of our accountability of the results reported. The Regional Council is a category III Provincial Government entity under the Transparency and Accountability Act.

We continue to be proud of the dedication and efforts of the members of the Central West Regional Council. Our meetings have been invigorating and educational, incorporating discussions and presentations from government officials and experts, tours of successful rural enterprises in our region, together with insightful deliberations by Council members. Our Regional Planner, Linda Brett, is worthy of our thanks for so ably coordinating these activities once again this year.

In June, we visited the Superior Glove Factory in Point Leamington, in November we toured Hi Point Peat near Bishop's Falls and in March we visited Newfoundland Styro in Bishop's Falls. All are exemplars of successful rural businesses, exporting to significant markets around the world.

Our members have been active participants and strong advocates for government's public engagements in our region, particularly the Health Summits in Baie Verte and Grand Falls-Windsor and the Open Government Initiative in Grand Falls-Windsor. Some also attended the Lands Act Review in Harbour Breton. This was especially pleasing as our Council had submitted an advice document in 2013 highlighting the need for land use planning in the province.

As well, in response to last year's advice document, Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs Director of Local Governance, met with Council to discuss their submission on Strengthening Local Governance and MIGA's Fiscal Framework. This year's focus and resultant advice document was Volunteer Leadership in Rural Communities. Council was pleased to be able to provide a regional perspective to this from their own knowledge and expertise supported by research and engagements. The significant challenge of volunteer recruitment and retention, particularly in leadership roles, was an issue close to the heart of most of our members.

Minister Kent has indicated a desire to renew council membership and we look forward to the outcome of this process. Some of our members have decided to move on and we thank them for their dedication. A particular thanks is extended to Deborah Armstrong and Hubert Langdon who were original members of Council. As well, Tracey Comeau has moved to new work in Ontario and has our best wishes and thanks for her service.

Our Council continues to be strong in its belief in a sustainable, vital and developing rural economy and we look forward to continuing our efforts to support this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Colin Forward".

Colin Forward, Chair

Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

8.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Rural Secretariat Region was 47,205. This represents a 2.9 per cent decrease from the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Rural Secretariat Region⁵ there were 16,880 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 4,100 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the region was \$24,400 up from \$19,700 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Rural Secretariat Region was 73.8 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 10,530 and the 2007 figure was 11,745. There were 4,350 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 5,250 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Rural Secretariat Region, 9,490 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 15,225 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 15.5 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent while 46.7 per cent rated it as very good. For the province, about 16.2 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 per cent as very good.

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

⁵ There was a 32.3% global non-response rate in the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

8.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council was comprised of nine members; three female and six male. The Council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including eight members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The Council met five times in 2014-15.

Regional Council members	Community
Colin Forward (Chair & Provincial Council Representative)	Baie Verte
Deborah Armstrong	Pleasantview
Jerry Dean	Botwood
Ruth Down-Robinson (Vice-chair & Provincial Council Alternate)	Grand Falls-Windsor
Jamie Kendell	St. Alban's
Hubert Langdon	English Harbour West
Steward May	Belleoram
Don Stewart	Harbour Breton
Joan Strickland	St. Alban's

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

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council spent approximately \$7,245 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs a Regional Planner in the region, who among other duties, acts as both an information resource and facilitator for the work of Council. The regional office is located in Springdale.

8.3 Report on Performance

In the 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. This objective was developed in consideration of the Council's mandate and financial resources along with the Provincial Government's strategic direction (Appendix A). In keeping with these strategic directions, Council will make use of any one of a number of tools to ensure Council is adequately informed in generating its advice to government. These tools include, but not limited to research activities, collaboration and dialogue which provide input into Council's policy advice document submissions.

This is the first report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each year of the plan.

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

Newfoundland and Labrador is undergoing a period of rapid economic, social and cultural change. With declining populations across large geographic areas combined with the downsizing in primary industry sectors, many regions are experiencing substantive pressures. The demographics in rural areas are changing; most communities have an aging population. However, rural residents continue to expect and demand quality services.

Given that governments and community organizations are needed to provide and sustain these rural services and communities, strong rural leadership is needed. Members of Central West Regional Council identified an existing gap in the number of future leaders and wished to provide advice to government on the need to support existing rural leaders as well as the recruitment of new leaders for the voluntary sector.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council decided to focus on volunteer leadership in the 2014-15 fiscal year. This issue was first identified during the November 1 and 2, 2013 Regional Council Meeting and the following criteria was used to identify volunteer leadership in rural communities as a priority issue : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has potential to positively impact regional sustainability ○ Will broadly impact residents across the region ○ Has major consequences if not investigated ○ Is within Provincial Government’s jurisdiction ○ Will strongly impact a particular group within a select geographic area ○ Is a timely issue

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>Researched and/or discussed issue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions on this issue began when the Senior Policy and Program Development Specialists for the Voluntary and Non-Profit Secretariat (VNPS) presented on significant issues in the non-profit sector, followed by deliberations with Council on key questions needing further exploration. • In preparation for their 2014-15 work on this issue, the Council met on March 1, 2014 and debated more specific topics of investigation on volunteer leadership; such as, significant barriers impeding recruitment, communication gaps between leaders of different age cohorts, and best practices to support rural leaders. They discussed and identified which research and researchers were best suited to address their study. • On April 4, 2014 Marion McCahon (MSC Candidate) presented her leadership research <i>Understanding Successful Leadership for Rural Community Development</i>. • Based on their analysis of McCahon’s research, the Community Sector Council research document, <i>Leadership Gap: Perceptions or Reality</i>, and Council’s capacity and knowledge of community leadership founded on many years of volunteering in rural areas, Council, over the course of several months, formulated a regional perspective and agreed upon a set of recommendations. The Council based its advice document on the following recommendations for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ create regional voluntary resource hubs. ○ provide/coordinate leadership skills development and mentoring for volunteers. This skills development program should be made available close to home and may be administered through volunteer hubs. ○ provide tax incentives for volunteer leaders. ○ implement strategies to recruit younger people for rural leadership.

<p>Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council submitted the advisory document <i>Volunteer Leadership In Rural Communities</i> to the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement and forwarded copies to the MHAs for Fortune Bay-Cape La Hune; Baie Verte – Springdale; Green Bay South; Exploits; and Grand Falls-Windsor. • A letter, accompanying the advice document, invited the Minister, or a senior member of his staff, to meet for further discussion of Council’s advice and the potential for influencing policy.
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Discussion of Results

“Non-profit and voluntary organizations deliver services, identify emerging needs, raise and distribute funds, promote volunteerism, encourage citizen engagement and influence policy initiatives. They touch every aspect of our lives from arts and cultural activities to health and social services”, writes Penny Rowe in *The Non-profit and Voluntary Sector in Atlantic Canada: Regional Highlights from the National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations*. Volunteers are an essential component in the communities of NL. The leaders of these volunteer activities are experiencing increased liability and responsibilities along with the sense of being taken for granted and not adequately appreciated. Yet despite the demand for more volunteers, there are fewer leaders assuming these responsibilities.

9. CORNER BROOK – ROCKY HARBOUR REGIONAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

As Chairpersons for the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council, we hereby submit the activity report for the period April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015. On behalf of the Council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, our signatures are indicative of the Council's accountability for the results reported.

The Regional Council has been committed to working on topics related to improved health care access in the region, and has been doing so in collaboration with the Health Research Unit at Memorial University as well as the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council who also share an interest in this topic

In a previous research project (*Issues, Barriers and Solutions to Health Care Access in Western NL*), enhanced Nurse Practitioner models were identified as a mechanism to improve health care access in the region. As a result, we have initiated a second research project to review the scope of Nurse Practitioners in the province, including ways Nurse Practitioner models have been applied in other jurisdictions and also recommendations that could be applied in the western region of Newfoundland and Labrador. This has been a continued partnership with the Health Research Unit, who completed a research report that identified tangible solutions to enhance the role of Nurse Practitioners in the province, including a list of enabling factors and conditions for this.

The Regional Council has taken steps to mobilize their findings, by meeting and sharing results with the Western Regional Health Authority and the Department of Health and Community Services. We are interested in continuing to support the advancement of this work in our region.

In addition, we are interested and have been engaged in work related to social entrepreneurship, and have worked with Grenfell Campus on this topic. Threats of oil and gas development, primarily hydraulic fracturing, are also of concern in the region. We wish to continue working in these areas, and look forward to continued research, dialogue and the provision of advice on important regional issues and solutions.

Sincerely,



Colleen Kennedy and Carla Wells

Co-Chairs, Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

9.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region was 47,205. This represents a 0.3 per cent decrease from the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region⁶ there were 17,395 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 3,850 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region was \$27,000 up from \$21,700 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region was 78.2 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 8,245. The 2007 figure was 8,805. There were 3,755 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 4,615 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region, 9,040 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 18,355 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 15.1 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent while 40.9 per cent rated it as very good. For the province, about 16.2 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 per cent as very good.

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

⁶ There was a 32.9% global non-response rate in the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

9.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council was comprised of six members; four female and two male. The Council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including five members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The Council met four times in 2014-15.

Regional Council members	Community
Colleen Kennedy (Co-Chair & Provincial Council Representative)	Rocky Harbour
Carla Wells (Co-Chair)	Corner Brook
Bertha Brophy	Rocky Harbour
Cyril Kirby	Deer Lake
Arch Mitchell	Benoits Cove
Joan Cranston	Norris Point

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

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council spent approximately \$985 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs a Regional Planner who, among other duties, acts as both an information resource and facilitator for the work of the Council. The regional office is located within the Sir Richard Squires Building in Corner Brook.

9.3 Report on Performance

In the 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Council identified one objective – to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. This objective considers the Council’s mandate and financial resources as well as the Provincial Government’s strategic direction (Appendix A). This is the first report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each year of the plan.

To ensure that the Regional Council is properly informed and adequately prepared in developing its advice to government, it uses a number of tools to assist in its work. In keeping with the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A), these tools include, but are not limited to, research activities, collaboration and dialogue which are used to support and inform Council’s policy advice document submissions.

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

The Regional Council chose the topic of enhancing models for Nurse Practitioners as their primary advice topic for this year. This was identified as a key recommendation in Council’s earlier research project on Access to Healthcare Services and the Council felt that Nurse Practitioners have the potential to play an important role in increasing access to healthcare services in the region.

The Council wished to gain a better understanding of the current and potential role of nurse practitioners in the region and province, as well as best practices and models from other jurisdictions. They partnered with the Health Research Unit at Memorial University of Newfoundland as well as the Stephenville – Port au Basques Regional Council to carry out this work. When the research was completed they shared the findings with provincial and regional partners and then hosted a partners meeting to discuss implementation of recommendations and associated potential policy changes. This engagement provided Council with additional evidence to take into consideration in the development of their advice to the Minister of Health and Community Services.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government	<p>Council agreed to build on their work from the previous year, and continue the focus on enhancing models for Nurse Practitioners (NP) in the province. They planned to spend time at their meetings reviewing the research report (completed at the end of March 2014), engaging with the researchers, Western Health and Government partners to better understand the current situation and opportunities. Once this engagement was carried out, Council would provide its advice to Government.</p> <p>Another related issue emerged during discussions with partners and researchers and this was a focus on collaborative/team-based primary healthcare models. Council identified this as another topic (during their meeting on September 9, 2014) on which they would like to provide advice and input.</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>Researched and/or discussed issue</p>	<p>In 2013-14, the Regional Council partnered with the Health Research Unit at Memorial University and the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council and asked them to review the current context for NP models in the Province, the different ways NP models have been applied in other jurisdictions and recommendations for applying these in a Newfoundland and Labrador context.</p> <p>Council received a presentation from the research team at their Council meeting held on June 5, 2014. This presentation outlined key findings and research team recommendations including:</p> <p>Successfully recruiting a NP to practice in a rural community requires the presence of several supporting and enabling factors and conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate legislation, support from the provincial NP or nursing association, and funding from government are essential requirements to ensure NPs are able to practice within a region; • Initiate a collaborative, consensus building process (among relevant government officials, the leadership of the Regional Health Authority (RHA), local communities and physicians) to identify a genuine and realistic need for a NP in a community. • Determine highest priority areas for NPs among various communities in a region based on need. • The community, the local RHA, and local physicians need to agree on the supports necessary to enable a NP to practice effectively including: the presence of appropriate physical facilities, adequate salary and compensation (including benefits, professional development, travel support), appropriate processes for consultation with other health care professionals including physicians, specialists and other NPs; • Recruiting the right person and retaining them in the long term requires a concerted effort on the part of all interested parties (government, RHA, physicians, community, etc.). <p>At the same meeting, Council also held a discussion with a local NP and researcher who highlighted the findings of her research on access to women’s health services in the region.</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>On September 9, 2014, representatives from both the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour and Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Councils met with the President and CEO of Western Health, several Vice Presidents from Western Health and a Regional Consultant from the Department of Health and Community Services to discuss the research outcomes and opportunities to change policy and implement actions based on these findings. Key discussion areas included: recruitment of physicians and nurse practitioners, funding models for nurse practitioners, progress in tele-health initiatives, the role for community and Health Authority collaboration for health facility provision, Collaborative/team-based models, the recent Western Health needs assessment and continuing the dialogue and engagement on health in the region.</p> <p>Council discussed the findings from the research and the meeting with health partners at their Council meetings held on December 9, 2014 and March 23, 2015.</p>
<p>Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement</p>	<p>A Regional Consultant from the Department of Health attended the Health Partners meeting held on September 9, 2014. At this meeting Council provided their advice/input related to Access to Health Services and their recommendations on an enhanced role for NPs in the region.</p> <p>Council finalized advice recommendations related to their NP project at their meeting held on March 23, 2015.</p> <p>An advice letter was submitted to Hon. Steve Kent, Minister of Health and Community Services on March 30, 2015 and copied to Western Health. This letter included a copy of the Nurse Practitioner Research Report and highlighted the following recommendations made by Council:</p> <p>Enhancing the Role of Nurse Practitioners by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing regional flexibility for Nurse Practitioners’ scope of practice, and enacting legislation to increase the scope of practice by allowing Nurse Practitioners to admit and discharge patients from hospital.

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review funding and funding flexibility for Nurse Practitioners and identify new options (reviewing models from other provinces). Expanding the numbers of Nurse Practitioners employed in the Western Health region. • Initiate a Grow Your Own Model to increase success in attracting and retaining Nurse Practitioners. Supports such as travel allowances and financing are important to successfully implementing this model. <p>Focusing on a Collaborative Practice model for primary healthcare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing clinical settings with multiple physicians and health care professionals, as a way to attract and retain healthcare professionals. • This model is key to enhancing primary healthcare in the province and supports required for this include training in collaborative work, alternate funding structures and support from Medical Associations and physicians • There is need for a community-based and collaborative needs assessment process to determine how best to address needs via the collaborative model. <p>The Council also circulated copies of the Nurse Practitioner research report to key policy makers at the Department of Health and Community Services.</p> <p>The Regional Council and the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council also wrote (on May 9, 2014) to Premier Davis, then Minister for Health and Community Services, providing information on recent research carried out by the Regional Councils related to health. They invited Minister Davis to send representatives from the Department to meet with both Councils to discuss priorities emerging from the research and opportunities to advance these priorities in the region.</p>

Discussion of Results

The research and partner engagement carried out on the topics of enhancing the role of Nurse Practitioners and collaborative models of care have provided valuable insights for the Regional Council and its partners. The recommendations provided by Council to the Department of Health and Community Services are not straightforward to implement and will require both legislative and structural changes. However, they have the potential to greatly enhance access to health care services for residents of our region. Funding and recruitment of NP services (both within Health Authorities and in private practice) require significant changes to enhance flexibility for organizations to deploy nurse practitioners where they are most needed. Innovative recruitment models such as a 'Grow Your Own' initiative are needed to train NPs with an interest in working in rural communities.

Establishing new collaborative models of care, particularly in rural areas also requires shifts from the normal provision of services in communities. These models have the potential to greatly enhance service delivery and physician recruitment, but may require pilot projects and extensive community engagement to highlight their benefits.

Alongside these changes, and integral to them, is the need to work closely and collaboratively with communities to understand their healthcare needs, access concerns and to empower communities to collaborate with Government and healthcare providers in enhancing their own healthcare.

Collaborations and partnerships are extremely important to policy change and innovative solutions in healthcare and one of the highlights of this years' work for the Regional Council has been the development and enhancement of partnerships (via information and research sharing, open discussions and provision of engagement expertise) with Western Regional Health Authority and the Department of Health and Community Services. It is hoped that these partnerships can continue and develop in the year ahead.

10. STEPHENVILLE – PORT AUX BASQUES REGIONAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

As chair of the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat, and in accordance with the Provincial Government's *Transparency and Accountability Act*, I am pleased to submit the Regional Council's Activity Report for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. The content of this report provides an overview of the Council's activities during this time frame. As chair, my signature is on behalf of the entire Council, and is indicative of our accountability for the results reported.

Over the past year, the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council has finalized a research project examining the potential role of nurse practitioners to improve access to health care in western Newfoundland. As part of this work, the Council has submitted an advice document to the department of Health and Community Services, which included the final research report (also available on the Office of Public Engagement, Rural Secretariat website). Through this research, the Council was particularly surprised to learn of the unequal distribution of nurse practitioners across the province. While nurse practitioner legislation was initially adopted to provide health care access in rural and remote areas, of the 127 registered nurse practitioners currently working in the province, the majority serves urban areas, and only 10 are employed in the Western Regional Health Authority. In the Council's advice submission, they recommended and advocated for an increased use of nurse practitioners in the Stephenville-Port aux Basques area.

In addition to this research, the Council has also identified a lack of (appropriate) career development opportunities for youth in the region as a concern. As a result, we have begun a project to examine ways in which youth can better be supported in this area. This project is still in its early stages, and the Council aims to have it completed next year.

Sincerely,



Dianna Kung
Chairperson
Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

10.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Rural Secretariat Region was 29,875. This represents a 3.6 per cent decrease from the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Rural Secretariat Region⁷ there were 9,265 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 2,990 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Rural Secretariat Region was \$23,500 up from \$18,800 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Rural Secretariat Region was 70.7 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers, the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Rural Secretariat Region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 6,885. The 2007 figure was 7,540. There were 4,290 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 5,390 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Rural Secretariat Region, 5,380 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 10,335 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 14.1 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent while 39.6 per cent rated it as very good. For the province, about 16.2 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 per cent as very good.

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

⁷ There was a 27.7% global non-response rate in the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

10.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Stephenville - Port aux Basques Regional Council was comprised of four members; two female and two male, with representation from both larger and smaller communities across the region. The Council met three times in 2014-15, these dates are: June 5, September 17, and February 19. A meeting was also scheduled for December, however poor weather conditions caused cancellation.

Regional Council members	Community
Dianna Kung (Chair)	Stephenville
Eric Legge	Cartyville
Marlene Farrell	St. George's
Walter Murphy	St. George's

For an updated list of Council members please visit http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regional_Councils/Council.html#spab

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council spent approximately \$155 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs a Regional Partnership Planner, who among other duties, facilitates the work of the Council and acts as an information resource. The regional office is located within the Department of Business, Culture, Tourism and Rural Development in Stephenville.

10.3 Report on Performance

In their 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Regional Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. To ensure that the Regional Council is properly informed and adequately prepared in developing their advice, and also keeping with the strategic directions of the Provincial Government (Appendix A), the Council uses a number of tools to assist in their work including research activities, collaboration and citizen engagement to support and inform their policy advice submissions.

This is the first annual report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each year of the plan.

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

The Regional Council has been tasked with the mandate to review and provide commentary to government on issues that impact the long-term regional sustainability of the Stephenville – Port

aux Basques Region. Health care, and equitable access to health care, is essential to regional sustainability. Members of the Regional Council are actively involved in, and deeply connected to the community, and saw this as a concern in the region. Access concerns are not limited to people living in rural and remote areas that must travel to access care, but also include people living in regional hubs such as Stephenville or Port aux Basques who have difficulty accessing physicians, mental health services, and other services not offered in the region. In a previous community-based research project jointly initiated by the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council and the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council, an increased use of Nurse Practitioners was identified as a potential solution to issues related to health care access in the region. As a result, the focus of the Regional Council’s work in 2014-15 was to explore Nurse Practitioner (NP) models of care used in other jurisdictions, and examine their potential in Western Newfoundland.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>Issue identified by council and/or requested by the Provincial Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stemming from a previous Council-led study, Regional Council members identified an increased use of NPs as a way to improve access to health care in the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Region. • In collaboration with the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council identified this as a priority research area, and partnered with the Health Research Unit at Memorial University to assist with the project.
<p>Researched and/or discussed issue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the initial stages of their work the Regional Council established a small working committee comprised of two Regional Council members from each council, the Principal Investigator with Memorial University, and the Regional Planner to oversee the research. • The Regional Council met several times over the year, and also provided comments and feedback via email, to discuss the research. • The project itself was primarily a literature review, which also included a jurisdictional scan (with interviews) on how NP models have been

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>used in our province, and also elsewhere, and also identified how new models/uses of NPs could be applied in the province, particularly western Newfoundland. The Department of Health and Community Services and the Western Regional Health Authority were informed of this research, and also invited to discuss the results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the research report was complete, the Regional Council held a small meeting involving executives from the Western Regional Health Authority (including health professionals), as well as staff from the Department of Health and Community Services to deliberate on the findings, and discuss advancing this important work. The Regional Council shared all research materials and findings with participants at the meeting. • At this meeting, the Council had the opportunity to learn new perspectives from participants in attendance. Following the meeting, Regional Council members continued to deliberate on research findings, and with the support of the Regional Planner began formulating their policy advice submission to the Department of Health and Community Services.
<p>Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regional Council submitted their policy advice, and also included a copy of the final research report, to the Minister of Health and Community Services on March 25, 2015.

Discussion of Results

The Stephenville – Port aux Basques region has an aging demographic. In 2011, our region had a total population of 29,875 people, of which 38 percent were aged 55 and older, and according to Statistics Canada, demographic trends suggest the aging population in our region will only increase, as will the demand for health related services. In addition to the aging population, the region is comprised of an extremely rural geography, which has an impact on access to health services. As an example, recruitment and retention of health professionals has been a challenge in many rural clinics, and patients must travel to access services (often to the nearest hub – Stephenville, Port aux Basques, Burgeo, or even outside of the region in Corner Brook). Increased access to NPs, for routine care, could help with the provision of needed services in the region, alleviate some of the pressure on the health system, and also increase patient satisfaction (a finding from the research).

Nurse practitioner legislation was initially adopted in the province to provide health care access in rural and remote areas, and the Council believes that they could fill an important gap in services by returning to this focus. Today there are 127 registered NPs in the province; however the vast majority serves urban areas. Of the 127 NPs, 55 are employed by Eastern Health, 26 by Central Health, 14 by Labrador/Grenfell Health, and 10 by Western Health.

Key Messages:

- Many rural and remote communities in the Stephenville-Port aux Basques region do not have adequate access to primary health care. Individuals also face challenges accessing primary health care services in the regional hubs of Stephenville and Port aux Basques.
- The core reasons that people are not accessing health care services include length of wait time for an appointment, services not being available in the area, and services not available at the time needed. Distance to travel, costs, transportation, and weather-related concerns were also raised as key barriers to accessing services.
- With adequate preparation and support, NPs can be a viable solution to improving access to health services in the Stephenville-Port aux Basques region.

Recommendations:

- The research conducted by the Health Research Unit strongly suggests that with adequate preparation and support, an enhanced use of NPs can provide a viable solution to improving access to health services in western Newfoundland. The Regional Council recommends an increased use of NPs, and feels that this will have two major benefits: (1) alleviate pressure on the current health system such as congestion in emergency rooms, and (2) provide services to those who are currently without.
- The Council believes that ‘high priority’ areas should be identified, this would include areas that are most in need of health services, and that these (at least initially) should be the focus of where NP positions are made available.
- Before implementing this model however, the Council believes that, as is indicated in the research findings, appropriate enabling legislation is required for this strategy to be most effective. This would involve sincere dialogue and collaboration between the community, Regional Health Authority and local physicians. Strong leadership and support from the Regional Health Authority is also needed.
- The research findings also listed five enabling factors needed for the successful recruitment of NPs into a rural community. The Council recommends these be considered. These include:
 - Legislation, support from the nursing association, and funding from the Provincial Government.

- A collaborative, consensus building processes to identify a realistic need for a nurse practitioner in a community.
- Determine the highest priority communities, based on need.
- A consensus on the supports needed to enable a NP to effectively practice is needed. This includes physical facilities, salary and compensation, and processes for consultation with other health care professionals.
- Recruiting and retaining well-suited NPs for the available positions.

11. ST. ANTHONY – PORT AU CHOIX REGIONAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

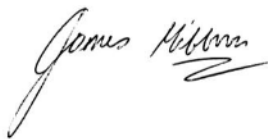
As Chairperson for the St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council, I hereby submit the Activity Report covering the period April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015. On behalf of the Council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, my signature is indicative of the Council's accountability for the results reported.

During the 2014-15 fiscal year, the council selected labour challenges as a priority area to work on due to the increasing difficulty in finding labour in the region. The Council worked diligently to develop a set of ideas and recommendations on this priority area and submitted a document to government in March 2015. Labour challenges that the region is currently facing is a critical issue that crosses all sectors and impacts everyone.

Over the past number of months, the Council has engaged a number of individuals, businesses and groups in the region and the province to inform their thinking on this priority. These discussions informed the document as well as validated some of the ideas and recommendations that are being put forth.

We look forward to the upcoming year, to continuing with this process and being able to provide advice to further contribute to the sustainability of the St. Anthony - Port au Choix region.

Sincerely,



James Gibbons
Chair, St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

11.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region was 12,240. This represents a 7.3 per cent decrease from the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region⁸ there were 4,240 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 2,025 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region was \$25,100 up from \$19,700 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region was 70.6 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 4,345. The 2007 figure was 4,955. There were 565 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 880 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region, 2,515 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 3,595 individuals who had received a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 13.6 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent while 37.4 per cent rated it as very good. For the province, about 16.2 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 per cent as very good.

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

⁸ There was a 41.3% global non-response rate in the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

11.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council was comprised of six members; one female and five male. The Council currently has representation from both large and small communities throughout the region. All members are from communities of less than 5,000 people. The Council met four times in 2014-15.

Regional Council Members	Community
James Gibbons (Chair)	St. Anthony
Ross Decker	Roddickton
Terry Hedderson	St. Lunaire-Griquet
Ted Lewis (Provincial Council Representative)	Roddickton
Gloria Toope	Plum Point
Loomis Way	Green Island Cove

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

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council spent approximately \$220 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs a Regional Planner in the region, who among other duties, acts as both an information resource and facilitator for the work of the Council. The regional office is located in Roddickton.

11.3 Report on Performance

In its 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. In order to meet this objective and to better inform the advice Council provides to the Provincial Government, the council has engaged a number of stakeholders and worked with partners which supports the strategic direction (Appendix A) of the Provincial Government.

This is the first annual report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each year of the plan.

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

The region is experiencing difficulty in attracting and retaining labour. The labour force is declining and young people are not staying in the region. Due to megaprojects currently underway in the

province, both skilled and unskilled labour is difficult to find. These projects are drawing people and local businesses are having difficulty finding people to fill positions. While we applaud the efforts to make Newfoundland and Labrador more competitive and lucrative and we agree that these projects are important and should proceed, Council would like to see some measures put in place to ensure that large short-term projects do not create challenges for smaller, long-term viable businesses in the region.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government</p>	<p>Council identified labour challenges as the issue to work on for the 2014-15 fiscal year.</p> <p>This issue was identified because of the impact megaprojects are having on the local business community. These short-term projects are attracting local labour and the business community is finding it difficult to attract and retain the labour needed to operate their businesses.</p>
<p>Researched and/or discussed issue</p>	<p>The Council met several times during 2014-15 to discuss the labour market issue.</p> <p>The Council engaged several businesses, groups and individuals through four focus group sessions. There were 28 participants in total at these sessions which were held in the communities of Plum Point, Port Saunders, Roddickton and St. Anthony. Participants were asked if they were experiencing labour challenges as well as if they had any solutions to the challenges they were facing.</p> <p>Information was also shared from the Workplace Challenges & Opportunities in Western NL Symposium held in Corner Brook on March 20, 2015 that was hosted by Grenfell Campus.</p> <p>These engagements and discussions informed the development of an advice letter and document.</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement</p>	<p>In March 2015, a letter and advice document was developed and submitted to the Minister of the Department of Advanced Education and Skills.</p> <p>The advice document contained 5 recommendations. These are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance the current Apprenticeship Program 2. Training to be included in current community enhancement programs 3. Promote and Support financial training incentives to work in rural areas 4. Accessibility to training and other programs <p>A copy was also sent to the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement.</p>

Discussion of Results

The St. Anthony-Port au Choix Regional Council met the indicators outlined for 2014-15 thereby accomplishing its objective.

12. LABRADOR REGIONAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for the Labrador Regional Council, I hereby submit the Annual Activity Report for the 2014-15 fiscal year. On behalf of the Council and in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, please accept my signature as indicative of the Council's accountability for any possible achievements reported here.

The last year provided the opportunity for council to understand the reality of previous commitments and begin to re-look at the same continuing challenges in the region. We also feel our council should be meeting regularly with government department champions in an effort to directly offer solutions for Labrador's long standing issues surrounding transportation, health care and community support.

Council knows that partnering for research takes time, money and commitment; is a worthwhile endeavor and it looks forward to doing more research in the future. Community input is a positive way to establish priorities for the region and council believes partnering with volunteers groups is a resourceful way to gather support and assemble advice.

Throughout the fiscal year we met four times and discussed collaboration and immigration. Through two research projects, the council submitted one piece of advice on the experience of temporary foreign workers in Labrador and attended a collaboration workshop; *Quebec Lower North Shore-Labrador Straits Regional Workshop sponsored by RDEE*. The research on the experience of temporary foreign workers living in Labrador West entitled: *Settlement of Newcomers in Labrador: What are the Gaps in Services?* The research provided the council with evidence-based data to inform our advice to government. The collaboration workshop provided the council with the opportunity to spend time in the straits of Labrador and Quebec.

The membership of our council is low and this presents challenges as we strive to meet our mandate, our combined years of volunteer experience, have taught us that if we are seriously expected to make change from the bottom up, then we require more members to support our work in the region. Without sufficient representation at the table for our vast region of 300,000 sq. kilometers, it is difficult to provide any substantial advice for government at this time.

Labrador is a complicated region but through dialogue and partnerships we hope to provide advice to government in a relevant and timely manner. We continue to support the advancement of sustainability in our Council's region, and within the Labrador Regional Council's mandate.

Respectfully submitted,



Leander Baikie

Chair, Labrador Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

12.1 Regional Profile

The 2011 Census population for the Labrador Rural Secretariat Region was 26,475. This represents a 1.3 per cent increase from the 2006 Census population. Comparatively, the population of the province had a 1.8 per cent increase since 2006 (514,535 in 2011, up from 505,470 in 2006).

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Labrador Rural Secretariat Region⁹ there were 12,810 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 2,155 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the Labrador Rural Secretariat Region was \$33,700 up from \$27,400 in 2006. For the province, personal income per capita was \$28,900.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for the Labrador Rural Secretariat Region was 89.6 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2011 was 81.2 per cent.

The number of individuals in the Labrador Rural Secretariat Region who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 3,920. The 2007 figure was 4,535. There were 1,755 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 2,210 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in the Labrador Rural Secretariat Region, 4,220 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 10,715 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 14.2 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in the Labrador Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status as excellent while 49.3 per cent it as very good. For the province, about 16.2 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 43.9 as very good.

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

⁹ There was a 29.0% global non-response rate in the Labrador Rural Secretariat Region. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

12.2 Regional Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Labrador Regional Council is comprised of six members; three female and three male. The Council currently has representation from both large and small communities throughout the region, including five members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The Council met four times in 2014-15.

Regional Council members	Community
Leander Baikie (Chair)	North West River
Carol Burden	Port Hope Simpson
Cora Edmunds	Postville
Hedley Ryland	L'Anse au Loup
Patsy Ralph	Labrador City
Robin Cooper	Happy Valley-Goose Bay

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

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 Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, the Labrador Regional Council spent approximately \$7,695 on meetings and associated expenses.

The Office of Public Engagement employs a Regional Planner in the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the Council and facilitates the work of the Council. The regional office is located at the office of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

12.3 Report on Performance

In the 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the region. This objective considers the Council's mandate and financial resources as well as the Provincial Government's strategic direction (Appendix A). The Council engages and collaborates with citizens and stakeholders in the region to support and inform the advice Council submits to government. The Council also participated in a conference on regional collaboration as part of their support of Government's strategic direction.

This is the first annual report of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Labrador Regional Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each of the three years.

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

The Labrador Regional Council chose to explore immigration and temporary foreign worker (TFW) issues for the 2014-15 fiscal year. These issues are common in the region and consequently, have

gained the attention of Council. The Labrador Regional Council was approached by a council member to participate in a research project entitled, *Settlement of Newcomers in Labrador: What are the Gaps in Services?* The Council felt this would be a good opportunity to learn about the issue and inform the development of their advice. Through a partnership with MUN and the Council, the Office of Public Engagement (OPE) proceeded to complete a research contract to support this work.

The researcher involved the Regional Council through two meetings:

- The Project Lead and Co-Investigator met (via conference call and in person) with the Regional Council between May - July 2014.
- A second meeting took place with the Regional Council between January and March 2015 prior to the submission of a final report.

These regular updates on the project and dialogue would form the basis of their advice to government for the fiscal year.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Labrador Regional Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government	The council identified immigration and temporary foreign workers as an important and emerging topic for Labrador. This issue also arose recently at a consultation held in the region by the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism as well as at a Harris Centre Regional Workshop in Labrador City.
Researched and/or discussed issue	<p>The OPE supported a research project which was used to inform the advice document submission to government. This project described the settlement experiences of newcomers/temporary foreign workers to Labrador West and provided details on settlement and integration services that are offered to newcomers, and identified gaps in services.</p> <p>The Council reviewed and discussed the research and proposed a number of recommendations in their advice document to government. The recommendations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Labour Relations Board is in a position to be proactive in supporting new comers to Newfoundland and Labrador through developing relationships with temporary foreign workers. The Council believes this relationship should begin in a timely manner upon arrival such as within the first four weeks.

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Labrador Regional Council supports the advice document submitted by the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council. This document is available online at: http://www.opec.gov.nl.ca/rural/whatweredoing/cbr_reports/25.RuralImmigrationReport.pdf • Explore how communication can be improved between the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism and Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) applicants to ensure their questions are answered in a timely fashion and that employees of the Office are completing the necessary paperwork. • Service NL reach out to the newcomer and temporary foreign worker population to explore how they might better educate the community on tenancy rights. A representative of Service NL should travel around Labrador to learn about the local issues and present and discuss the province’s residential tenancies regulations. • Organizations in Labrador already assisting newcomers and temporary foreign workers (such as churches and the Filipino Association) be provided capacity to formalize work that is already being done. • The right mix of funding to organizations and for programs and services could help support the integration of TFW into our communities. • Community sessions are organized in Labrador West and Goose Bay to explore the experience of employers who hired TFWs and the workers themselves. • Increase opportunities for dialogue. For example, in Manitoba, partners meet several times a year to have a dialogue between employers, temporary foreign works/immigrants, community and other sectors such as health to support the integration of TFWs <i>An overview of temporary foreign workers in Brandon, Manitoba: Expectations, roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders– governments, communities, and employers. Discussion paper #1</i> • The Department of Advanced Education and Skills explore a mandate for an expansion of the provision of funding, so that services for immigrants and temporary foreign workers can be provided by local organizations in communities. <p>The full report is available online at: http://www.opec.gov.nl.ca/rural/whatweredoing/cbr_reports/35.MullingsandAndersonFinalReport-LabWestProject.pdf</p>
<p>Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement</p>	<p>The Labrador Regional Council submitted its advice document on March 28, 2015 to the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills; Minister of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development; Minister Responsible for the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation; and Minister Responsible for the Disability Policy Office.</p>

Discussion of Results

The study is significant given the lack of Labrador-specific research in the area of settlement and integration. The research is especially noteworthy given the increase in newcomers/temporary foreign workers in this area of the province and the continuing economic growth and labour shortages in Labrador. Developing a clearer understanding of the experiences of newcomers and TFWs may better inform how communities can improve their abilities to attract and retain individuals who can thrive within the region.

The research indicated that TFWs often feel vulnerable to being exploited in the workplace. The Council believes that it is very important that TFWs have access to a confidential outlet where they may be able to anonymously report instances of such exploitation. An increase in services to newcomers could alleviate many of their struggles and could be accomplished through a reorganization of resources within the community. The Council also believes the lessons learned from this project may be applied to other parts of Labrador and the province.

13. PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

Message from the Chair

As chairperson for the Provincial Council, I hereby submit the Annual Activity Report for the 2014-15 fiscal year. The period of time covered by this report extends from April 1, 2014 through to March 31, 2015. 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.

Council is very pleased with the level of engagement by the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement with Provincial Council. The Minister has met with Provincial Council members on issues affecting the province and provided an opportunity for open dialogue and feedback on advice that has been submitted to date by Provincial Council to government.

Provincial Council submitted an advice document pertaining to the Public Call for Expressions of Interest for Regional Council Appointments during the 2014-15 year. In addition, council members have participated in opportunities to provide in-person input/feedback on Primary Health Care, Open Government Initiative, and Poverty Reduction Action Plan.

The Provincial Council is pleased with the advice it has provided to government and that government is soliciting input/feedback from the public on various issues affecting the province. Provincial Council welcomes the opportunity to be engaged in the future by government.

Sincerely,



Sheila Kelly-Blackmore
Chair
Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat

13.1 Provincial Profile

The 2011 Census population for Newfoundland and Labrador was 514,535. This represents a 1.8 per cent increase from the 2006 Census population.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in Newfoundland and Labrador¹⁰ there were 218,630 individuals in the labour force who were employed during the week of May 1-7, 2011 and 37,265 who were unemployed. The 2010 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in the province was \$28,900 up from \$22,900 in 2006. For Canada, personal income per capita was \$31,600.

The 2011 self-reliance ratio for Newfoundland and Labrador was 81.2 per cent. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance and Income Support Assistance. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers the lower the self-reliance ratio.

The number of individuals in the province who received Employment Insurance at some point in the year 2013 was 84,455. The 2007 figure was 93,485. There were 43,275 individuals who received income support at some point during 2013. This number is down from 53,220 in 2007.

The National Household Survey (2011) reported that in Newfoundland and Labrador, 100,215 individuals 15 years and older had attained a high school diploma or equivalent. There were 210,190 individuals with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2009-10, approximately 16.2 per cent of individuals age 12 and over in Newfoundland and Labrador rated their health status as excellent while 43.9 per cent rated it as very good. For Canada, about 22.4 per cent rated their health status as excellent and 37.7 per cent as very good.

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

¹⁰ There was a 31.4% global non-response rate in Newfoundland and Labrador. The global non-response rate is used as an indicator of data quality; the lower the rate, the lower the risk of inaccuracy.

13.2 Provincial Council Overview

As of March 31, 2015, the Provincial Council was comprised of 14 members; seven female and seven male. The Provincial Council is comprised of one representative from each of the nine Regional Councils and Provincial at large members that bring a provincial perspective. If the regional representative is unable to attend the meetings of the Provincial Council, an alternate will attend to represent the region. The Council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the province. The Council met twice in 2014-15.

Provincial Council members	Community
Chair	
Sheila Kelly-Blackmore	Sandy Cove
At-Large Members	
Donna Butt	Trinity
Penelope Rowe	St. John's
Tony Keats	Dover
Kara Snow	St. Anthony
Regional Representatives	
Kerry Murray (Avalon Peninsula) Alternate: Maureen Sullivan	Conception Bay South Calvert
Mervin Wiseman (Clarenville-Bonavista) Alternate: Marilyn Coles-Hayley	North Harbour Elliston
Harold Murphy (Burin Peninsula) Alternate: Dominic Lundrigan	Parker's Cove Burin
David Regular (Gander-New-Wes-Valley) Alternate: Jim Snow	Summerford Lewisporte
Colin Forward (Grand Falls-Windsor-Baie Verte-Harbour Breton) Alternate: Ruth Down-Robinson	Baie Verte Grand Falls-Windsor
Colleen Kennedy (Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour) Alternate: Vacant	Rocky Harbour
Dianna Kung (Stephenville-Port aux Basques) Alternate: Vacant	Stephenville
Ted Lewis (St. Anthony-Port au Choix) Alternate: Gloria Toope	Roddickton Plum Point
Leander Baikie (Labrador) Alternate: Vacant	North West River

For an updated listing of Council members please visit http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/provincial_Council/members.html

The Council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Provincial Council meetings are held in St. John's over two days and bring together members from across the province. Meetings of the Council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Office of Public Engagement. In 2014-15, Council spent approximately \$16,170 on meetings and associated expenses.

13.3 Report on Performance

In its 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Provincial Council identified one objective: to provide ongoing advice to the Provincial Government on issues that affect the province. The activities and performance of the Council with respect to this objective, as outlined below, are in support of the Provincial Government's strategic directions (Appendix A). In keeping with the Provincial Government's strategic direction, Council will make use of any one of a number of tools to ensure that it is adequately informed in generating its advice to government. These tools may include, but are not limited to research activities, collaboration and dialogue which support and inform Council's policy advice document submissions.

This is the first reporting year of the 2014-17 planning cycle and the Provincial Council will be reporting on the same objective, measure and indicators for each of the three years.

Issue: Provide Advice to Government

In the Fall of 2014, the Provincial Government made a public call for expressions of interest from individuals who would like to be considered for appointment to one of the nine Rural Secretariat Regional Councils throughout the province. In 2011, the Provincial Council provided recommendations to government around how government appoints and selects individuals for government appointed bodies. As a result and to build upon the advice previously provided, Council saw the opportunity to further advise government on the public call for expressions of interest to address vacancies on Regional Councils.

Objective:

By March 31, 2015, the Provincial Council will have provided advice, via written submission and/or in-person engagement, to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to provincial sustainability.

Measure:

Provided advice to the Provincial Government via written submission and/or in-person engagement

Indicators	Accomplishments
Issue identified by Council and/or requested by the Provincial Government	Building upon the advice it previously provided, Council saw an opportunity to further advise government on the public expressions of interest to address vacancies on the Regional Councils specifically on recruitment and the selection process.
Researched and/or discussed issue	<p>Council met with the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement on two occasions to discuss vacancies on Regional Councils throughout the province.</p> <p>The Minister informed Provincial Council that the recommendations submitted in our advice document entitled <i>Government Appointment Process</i>, in 2011 were considered in the upcoming call for “Expressions of Interest”. Council was delighted to have been provided with feedback on how the components were incorporated into the expression of interest.</p> <p>Council revisited the advice document submitted in 2011, <i>Government Appointment Process</i>, and had further dialogue about government appointments specifically for Regional Council vacancies. Through discussions, the Provincial Council provided recommendations to the Minister Responsible for Office of Public Engagement.</p>
Provided advice to government via written submission and/or in-person engagement	<p>The Provincial Council had further discussions around the public call for expressions of interest and the content of our advice document. Based on this, Council believed it is critical for government, when considering appointments, to ensure that there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A timely response to fill positions once the Expression of Interest is publically announced; • Accountability of appointed members; • Consistency in the appointment process; and, • Transparency in the recruitment and selection of new members. <p>In Council’s advice document, “<i>Government Appointment Process (2011)</i>”, potential appointment models were outlined. It is Council’s opinion that cabinet approval for all appointees to Regional Council is not necessary. For Regional Council appointments, they recommend a hybrid model whereby 2/3 of appointments would be made by Cabinet and that Regional Council members would have the autonomy to appoint 1/3 of the individuals without cabinet</p>

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>approval and to appoint individuals in the interim when vacancies exist.</p> <p>During the fiscal year of 2014-15, Provincial Council recommended the following points moving forward with the recruitment and selection process for the Expression of Interest for Regional Council to government:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorporate a hybrid model whereby Cabinet appoints 2/3 and Council members appoint 1/3 of the members. 2. Develop a process to address current members who are not actively involved in or not attending Council meetings on a regular basis. There is no process to address the issue of inactive Council members which leaves councils work hampered by too few members to complete our important work. 3. Ensure appointments are for specific terms and are rotational to ensure adequate succession planning. 4. The Expression of Interest should clearly state the roles and responsibilities of Council members. 5. Ensure that the time from the public “Expression of Interest” and the confirmation of appointments is a maximum three month time frame. The Expression of Interest should state this time frame. 6. Ensure the Expression of Interest process allows individuals to self-nominate or be nominated by another individual or organization. 7. Establish a data base of names to be used to back fill vacancies as they occur. 8. Unsuccessful applicants should be informed by letter that a decision on appointments has been made. 9. Engage Councils in the final selection process by forwarding a list of names and bios for their region for consideration. Enable Councils to review applications and make recommendations to the Minister for appointments based on regional needs.

Indicators	Accomplishments
	<p>With regards to the marketing of the Expression of Interest, the following entities were identified as groups whose membership database could increase awareness and interest in serving on Regional Councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federation of Labour • Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador • Community Sector Council • Chambers of Commerce • Hospitality NL • Career Education and Training Network (cetnetwork@nald.ca) for Labrador • Association for New Canadians • Multi-cultural Women’s Organization of NL • Hospitality NL • NL Employers Council <p>As well, social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and local newspapers were also recommended to create increased awareness amongst users.</p> <p>In November 2014, Council submitted advice to the Minister Responsible for Office of Public Engagement.</p>

Discussion of Results

The council has met its objective of providing advice to the Provincial Government. Members met with the Minister Responsible for Office of Public Engagement to discuss the Public Call for Expressions of Interest for Regional Councils. Through discussions and deliberations, the council came to a consensus on the advice that it was to submit to government for consideration. The Provincial Council submitted this advice in November 2014 to the Minister Responsible for the Office of Public Engagement.

14. ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to the points raised in Regional Councils' Report on Performance sections, a number of additional highlights and accomplishments are worthy of mention. These are consistent with the mandates and will serve to inform the work of the Councils.

Council	Highlights
Avalon Peninsula Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In May, during a regular meeting, Council received a presentation from Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs staff on types of governance models within the province (municipal, non-municipal, local service district) and how they operate. In addition, during the meeting members participated in an engagement session around the Municipal Fiscal Framework review. In May, members were engaged by staff of the OPE to inform Government's Open Government Initiative. Members of Avalon Council participated in various engagement sessions of the Regional Health Forum and Premier's Summit on Primary Health Care on the Avalon Peninsula.
Clarenville – Bonavista Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador issued a public call for an Expression of Interest to serve on Rural Secretariat Regional Councils in 2014-2015. Regional Councils, including Clarenville-Bonavista, had vacancies for membership and its members saw this as an opportunity to provide input into the criteria for selection of successful candidates to the Council. Council believes that better representation of civil society is critical in balancing viewpoints and presenting a more inclusive approach when gathering input and providing advice to Government.
Burin Peninsula Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April 2014 the Regional Council met with RCMP Staff Sgt. for the Burin Peninsula, Wayne Edgecombe to discuss their findings on issues facing youth on the Burin Peninsula and to learn more about what the RCMP are observing in their work and how they are dealing with these issues in the region. In May 2014 the Regional Council met with Ruby Hoskins, founder and chairperson of the STAND Against Drugs committee on the Burin Peninsula. Ms. Hoskins provided the council with an overview of the work her committee is conducting in the region and the youth issues they are encountering in their work. The Regional

	<p>Council also provided Ms. Hoskins an overview of their findings from their work in 2013-14 on youth issues on the Burin Peninsula.</p>
<p>Gander – New-Wes-Valley Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the 2013-14 Reporting period Council conducted in-person engagements, interviews and administered an online questionnaire to hear from residents concerning how local governance structures (municipalities and local service districts) could be strengthened. A summary report “Strong Local Governance Leads to a Stronger More Sustainable Region” of the engagement sessions was compiled and utilized by Council for an advice submission to government on local governance. In early Fall 2014 this report was shared with individuals that participated in the engagements, municipalities and local service districts in the region. • During May 2014 Council meeting the Office of Public Engagement provided information and engaged Council on the Open Government Initiative. Council shared ideas to make government more open, criteria government could consider when engaging citizens and how a collaboration culture could be encouraged within the Province. Council members also attended the public session of the Open Government Initiative that took place September 2014 in Glovertown. • November 7, 2014 Council joined Central West Regional Council meeting, via teleconference to engage with the Director of Local Governance, Municipal and Intergovernmental Affairs regarding the “Strengthening Local Governance” advice submitted in the 2013-14 reporting period. • Fall 2014, Council planned a “Freshwater & Ocean Health: Future Water Quality Solutions” session that was postponed. Council has also engaged Dr. Kelly Vodden, Associate Professor Environmental Studies, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University regarding her work on water quality and possible drinking water solutions. Council is exploring possible synergies between Dr. Vodden’s future research and the rescheduling of the session. • Fall 2014 & Winter 2015, Council identified economic development as a priority and began planning an engagement process for the upcoming year. A discussion document “Strengthening Economic Development in the Gander-New-Wes-Valley Region” and engagement questions were drafted and stakeholders to be engaged were identified.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter 2015, Council began an engagement process seeking input from citizens to identify regional priorities. The information collected will be used to better understand the public perceptions of the Region’s strengths and weaknesses. • March 2015, Mr. Ambrose English, Environmental Response, Canadian Coast Guard presented on the sunken vessel MV Manolis L and the environmental response off Change Islands, NL. • Council is a partner in the “Uniting Community Leaders” initiative. Initiated in Summer 2014, this multiphase collaborative initiative involving various partners will examine how best to increase civic engagement (volunteer opportunities) amongst youth and community organizations in three areas within the Gander-New-Wes-Valley Region. To date, a jurisdictional scan has been completed, and both youth and volunteer community organizations in each of the three areas have been engaged.
<p>Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the past year, members of the Grand Falls-Windsor-Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council attended the following GNL public consultations whereupon Council members became more informed and provided regional input: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open Government Initiative – GFW ○ Land Act Review – Hr. Breton ○ Regional Health Forums – Baie Verte and GFW Regional Council members found the consultations interesting, informative and enjoyed the interactive format. • Council believes having a strong economic base is essential to sustaining rural regions. Given the challenges to operating any business, Council was interested in understanding how businesses succeed in rural NL. During the past year they toured and met with the owners/operators of three successful businesses within this region. • On April 1, 2015, OPE staff facilitated an Open Government Initiative presentation to Council highlighting this government-wide effort to improve access to government information and data; enhance government’s overall engagement of citizens and stakeholders; and strengthen collaboration between and among all sectors including government.

<p>Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regional Council provided a letter of support (dated August 26, 2014) in support of a proposed affordable housing development in the Town of Rocky Harbour. It was felt that the increased availability of affordable and high quality housing options would be an important contributor to the sustainability of the region. • A Regional Council member attended the Premier’s Health Summit, held on January 14, 2015 in St John’s. Council wrote to the Minister (letter dated December 18, 2014) to request the opportunity to attend, because of the significant overlap with the work they have already completed regarding access to healthcare services in the region. The Council member who attended was able to highlight this research and participate in the summit dialogue. At the following Council meeting they provided an overview of the summit and key discussion topics. • Regional Council members and the Regional Planner distributed printed and emailed copies of the research summary report on <i>‘Issues, Barriers and Solutions to Accessing Healthcare In Western Newfoundland’</i> to partners and community members in the region. • Council members provided input regarding the methodology and questions for a proposed labour market research project in the region.
<p>Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On June 5, 2014, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council and Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council jointly organized a meeting with executives from Western Health and also staff from the Department of Health and Community Services to share the nurse practitioner research results and discuss advancing the findings. • On June 5, 2014 (separate from the meeting on the nurse practitioner research), the Council met remotely via Microsoft Lync with the OPE’s Assistant Deputy Minister who shared findings from the Gamble Report, and also engaged the Council and solicited feedback on the Open Government Initiative. • On February 14, 2015, as part of the Regional Council Meeting, staff of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, provided a presentation and overview on Career Cruising. This was to provide more information to Council on programs, resources and supports available to students on career development – an area they have identified as a priority in the region.

<p>St. Anthony – Port au Choix Regional Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On July 21, 2014, the Council met remotely via Microsoft Lync with staff of the OPE who shared findings from the Gamble Report. This gave the Council information on an evaluation process that was undertaken for the Regional Councils. The council had an opportunity to learn about the results and also have a discussion on the outcomes.
<p>Labrador</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Labrador Regional Council Members had the pleasure of attending the <i>Quebec Lower North Shore Labrador Straits Regional Collaboration Workshop</i> in the Straits of Labrador. This was a special opportunity and coincided with the research collaboration, “The Influence of Lines on Cross Jurisdictional Collaboration in Canada and the Implications for Labrador”, and provided a networking opportunity for the council members that was very rewarding. The two day workshop held on October 14-16, 2014 consisted of many presenters from Labrador and Quebec with the focus being on how the region can collaborate and work together and solve regional issues. The report from the workshop can be found: http://crrf.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Final-Report-EN-QLNS-LS-Regional-Workshop.pdf.
<p>Provincial Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the past year, members of the Provincial Council attended the following Government of Newfoundland and Labrador public consultations whereupon Council members became more informed and provided regional input: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open Government Initiative ○ Regional Health Forums ○ Premier’s Summit on Primary Health Care ○ Poverty Reduction Strategy

15. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES AHEAD

As the nature of the work of the Provincial and Regional Councils is broad-based and long-term in nature, the challenges and opportunities faced by the Councils remain fairly similar from year to year.

Provision of policy advice to government

The mandate of Councils commits them to reach consensus on the priorities for change in their region and to identify policies and programs to encourage desired change. The challenge for each Council, given the members generally only meet four times per year, and given the range of issues, perspectives, interests and needs within regions, is to reach consensus on priorities for change and on policy advice to provide to the Provincial Government. The opportunity for Councils is to position themselves as objective, informed and influential advisory bodies within their region that can both provide informed citizen-based policy advice to government as well as respond to policy level requests from government that may impact on the region.

Regional collaboration

The mandate of Councils involves sharing information, advancing regional cooperation and encouraging regional partners to more actively participate on matters that can advance regional sustainability. There are two opportunities for Councils. Firstly, they can position themselves as broad-based and cross-sectoral advisory bodies that can lead, participate, and/or support regional collaboration across a range of sectors, communities and interests. Secondly, as broad-based advisory bodies, they can identify the various supports necessary to foster collaboration and be a conduit for advice to government to advance efforts.

Regional communications

The Councils understand that a range of non-governmental organizations in rural areas provide advice to the Provincial Government on a range of policy matters. In large part, these organizations are focused on particular needs and interests, among others, regional economic development, environmental awareness and protection, social policy advancement and municipal governance. The challenge is to openly and positively communicate its mandate and role to the Provincial Government as well as 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 Council, through new and strengthened relationships with regional stakeholders and the Provincial Government, is to ensure that a broad range of perspectives are considered as it identifies regional priorities, provides advice to government and fosters collaboration.

APPENDIX A: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Title: Public Engagement in Newfoundland and Labrador

Outcome Statement:

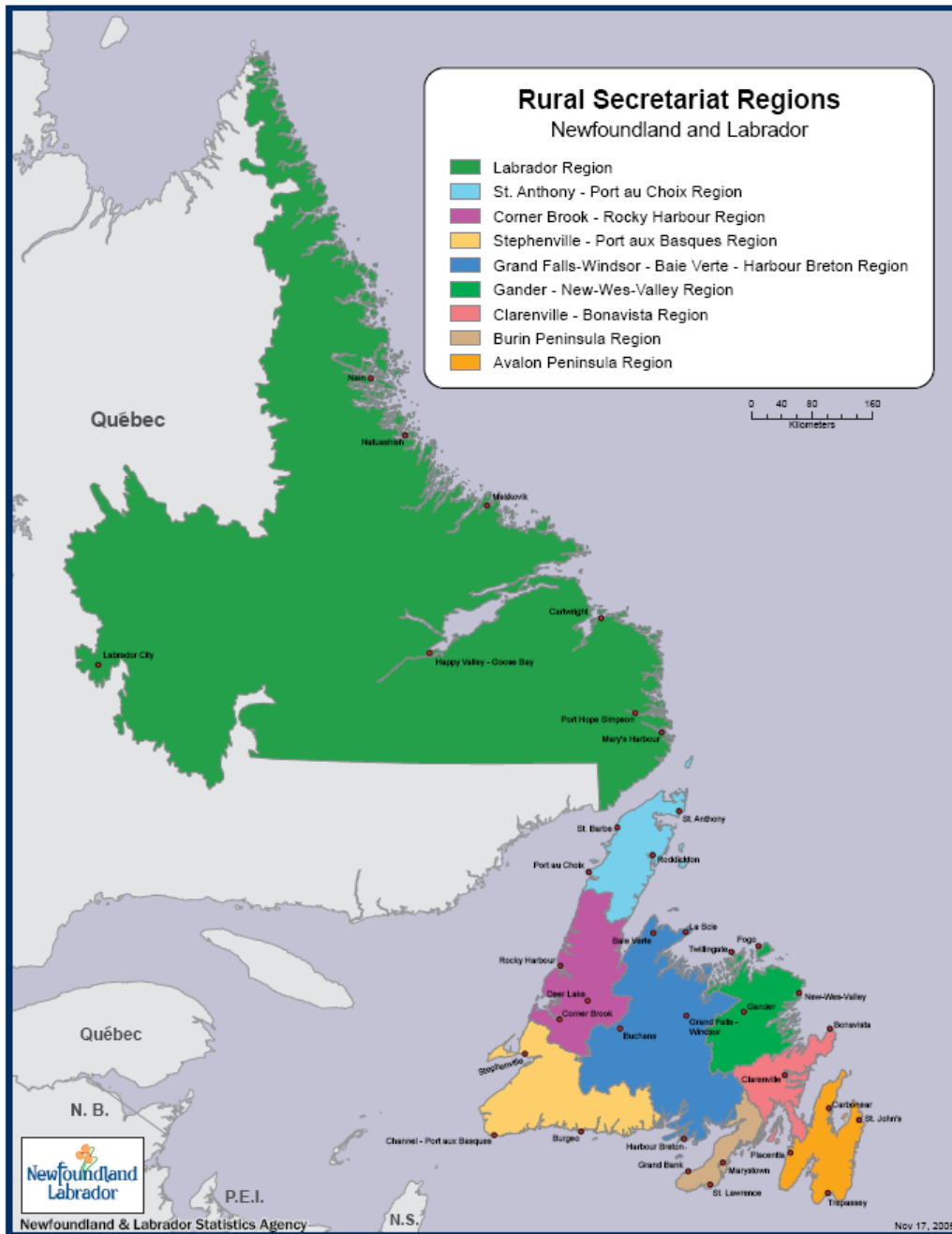
Citizen and stakeholder participation is enhanced through innovative open government initiatives and best practices in public engagement

Focus Areas:

- Open data
- Open information
- Dialogue
- Collaboration

Focus Areas/Components of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is: addressed in the Councils' activity plan
1. Open data	
2. Open information	
3. Dialogue	✓
4. Collaboration	✓

APPENDIX B: MAP OF RURAL SECRETARIAT REGIONS





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