

St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority

Annual Performance Report

April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020



Chairperson's Message

The Honourable Elvis Loveless
Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
Petten Building
30 Strawberry Marsh Road
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

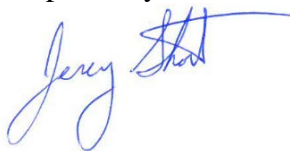
Dear Minister Loveless:

In accordance with the provisions of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for category 3 public bodies, I am pleased to submit the Annual Performance Report for the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority for the period April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

The St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority was successful in fulfilling its objective for the reporting period. The Authority was also successful in supporting government's commitment to enhanced utilization, sustainability, and public awareness of the forestry, agriculture and agrifoods sector.

My signature below is on behalf of the Authority and indicative of the Authority's accountability for the results reported on its activities for 2019-20.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeremy Short
Chairperson

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Overview

Section 3 of the **St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area Regulations** under the **Lands Act** provides for the appointment of a St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority (the Authority). The Authority is appointed by the Minister of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture and must have at least five people, including a Chairperson and a Secretary. During the reporting period, the Authority was made up of members from the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, as well as members from other resource departments as per the regulations.

The membership of the Authority for the whole of 2019-20 (at March 31, 2020) consisted of the following members:

Name	Position	Department
Jeremy Short	Chair	Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
Megan Nichols	Secretary	Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
You Jiao	Secretary	Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
John Del Rizzo	Member	Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
Teri Smith	Member	Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture
Karen Tucker	Member	Digital Government and Service Newfoundland and Labrador
Kimberly Blanchard	Member	Environment, Climate Change and Municipalities

All members are employees of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and receive no additional remuneration for their involvement in the Authority. There is no budget allocation specific to the duties of the Authority.

The Authority received extensive operational support from the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture. Employees of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture performed day-to-day administrative functions, and consulted other staff regarding applications where necessary. Budgetary support for operations was provided through the department as well.

Contact Information:

Megan Nichols, Land Management Officer, St. John's, (T) 729-6647

Mandate:

The St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority has a mandate to:

- (a) Review applications to carry out development on land within the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area;
- (b) Inform municipalities of decisions made;
- (c) Monitor activities within the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area; and
- (d) Ensure awareness of the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area and associated regulations.

For more detail on the regulations, please refer to the House of Assembly web site at: <http://assembly.nl.ca/Legislation/sr/regulations/rc961079.htm>.

Clients:

The clients of the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority are individuals or organizations who apply through the municipal councils of the City of St. John's; Town of Portugal Cove-St. Philip's; Town of Pouch Cove; Town of Flatrock; Town of Torbay; Town of Logy Bay-Middle Cove-Outer Cove; and the Town of Conception Bay South to carry out development on land in the Agricultural Development Area of the St. John's Urban Region.

Activities

The St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority contributes to the 2017-20 goals and objectives of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture regarding natural resource development. Specifically, the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority supports Government's commitment to enhanced utilization, sustainability and public awareness of the forestry, agriculture and agrifoods sector. During the 2019-20 reporting year this was done through the protection of agricultural land and farm activities within the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area in the review of applications for development activities and by regulating development to ensure consistency with agricultural purposes.

The 2019-20 objective and indicators are derived from the 2017-20 Activity Plan of the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority and are used for all three years of the plan. The 2017-20 Activity Plan is available from Jeremy Short, Manager of Agriculture Lands of the Land Management Division, at 709-637-2081.

Objective:

By March 31, 2020, the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority will have worked to ensure development activities in the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area are compliant with the Act and Regulations, thus supporting ongoing, sustainable agricultural development in the area.

Indicators:

- Reviewed all applications and rendered decisions
- Periodically met with municipalities and land owners to provide education and awareness on the role of the Authority.
- Maintained records of decisions
- Communicated decisions to municipalities in a timely manner
- Monitored development activities for compliance with regulations and reported to municipal jurisdiction any non-compliance where applicable

In 2019-20, the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority met on 11 occasions to review 14 applications for agricultural and non-agricultural development within the boundaries of the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area. The applications were reviewed by a quorum of the Authority. Of the 14 applications that were reviewed: four were applications for accessory buildings (garage/shed); two were applications for residence; and five applications were farm related.

One application each was also reviewed for a dog kennel, a commercial subdivision, and a telecommunications tower. Out of the 14 applications received and reviewed, eight were approved, four were refused, one was found to be outside the ADA and one was deferred. Two decisions of the Authority were awaiting appeal to the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Appeal Board. One appeal was heard in 2019-20 and the other will be heard in 2020-21.

The Authority maintained its relationships with municipalities and landowners throughout 2019-20. Decisions of the Authority were forwarded to municipalities to be communicated to applicants directly. Regular communication with landowners within the St. John's ADA regarding the development requirements within the area were completed, in the form of personal meetings, site visits and written correspondence.

Three site visits were conducted in 2019-2020 including one in Pouch Cove and two in in the St. John's area.

The Secretary of the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority maintained and updated a registry of all applications, including decisions. Within 30 days of a decision, the Secretary had forwarded the decisions of the Authority to the applicable Municipalities, which are responsible

for informing applicants of the decision, including an explanation of the Authority's decision pursuant to the Regulations. All applications were processed in a timely fashion.

Staff members of the Authority regularly perform field work within the St. John's Urban Region Agricultural Development Area and actively monitor development activity to ensure compliance with respect to the regulations during these routine field visits. During the 2019-20 development season, eight monitoring inspections were completed.

Opportunities and Challenges

Much of the land in the St. John's agricultural area is privately owned. While this land may have been used for farming in the past, the current owners may not have the ability or will to develop it for agriculture.

There are also opportunities to work with municipalities to increase awareness and promotion of agricultural development within their boundaries to a new generation of farmers.

Financial Information

Audited financial statements are not required as the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority is budgeted through the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture. There are no per diems, travel or other costs associated with the administration of the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority.