

Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional
Council of the Rural Secretariat

Annual Activity Report
2005-06



Tablelands, NL

Message from the Co-Chairs

As Co-Chairs for the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council, we hereby submit the annual activity report for the 2005-06 fiscal year. On behalf of the council and in accordance with the *Guidelines for Annual Activity Reports for Category 3 Government Entities*, our signatures are indicative of the council's accountability for the results and any variances explained herein.

The Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council was appointed in August 2005 and held its first meeting in October 2005. The contents of this report outline the council's activities for the remaining five months of the fiscal year.

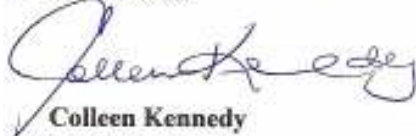
These first meetings served as an orientation to the council's role and responsibilities. The Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council found that having Co-Chairs has proven to be an effective method for accomplishing its work. The council has experienced good attendance and participation at meetings. The council had the opportunity to discuss its role in the context of the regional demographics, clarify its values and develop a better understanding of what regional sustainability means in the context of environmental, economic, social and cultural mandates. The council received regional specific information that enabled it to better understand the opportunities and challenges within the region. Over the coming months, the council will work towards the identification of regional priorities and will initiate a citizen engagement process to begin to further refine these priorities.

We look forward to the work ahead.

Sincerely,



Don Downer



Colleen Kennedy

Co-Chairs

Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

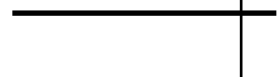


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Regional Council Overview

The Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council is comprised of 12 members; 7 female (58%) and 5 male (42%). Members of the council have a variety of backgrounds that include social work, education, marine biology, economic development, physiotherapy, business, public sector, tourism, electrical, nursing and youth. The council has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region:

Name	Community
Juanita Brake	Corner Brook
Bertha Brophy	Daniel's Harbour
Gina Caines	Corner Brook
Joan Cranston	Norris Point
Don Downer, Co-Chair	Corner Brook
Phillip Hicks	Corner Brook
Darrel House	Cow Head
Colleen Kennedy, Co-Chair	Rocky Harbour
Colleen Kennedy-Costello	Pasadena
Roger Keough	Parson's Pond
Cyril Kirby	Deer Lake
Carla Wells	Corner Brook

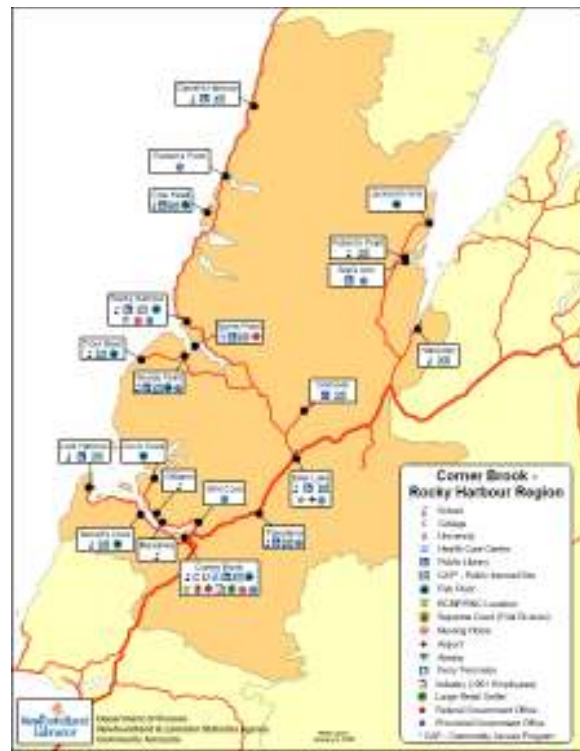
**For an updated listing of council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalmem.asp>.*

The council does not have a budget allocation. Meetings of the council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Rural Secretariat. The Rural Secretariat also funds a staff position within the region, who among other duties, acts as an information resource for the council and is responsible for facilitating the work of the council. The staff person for the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour region is Doris Hancock, who works out of Corner Brook. Her office is co-located with a number of government departments.

Overview of the Region

The Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Region includes the surrounding area of Corner Brook and White Bay South to Jackson's Arm extending north to, but not including, River of Ponds.

The region is the fourth largest Rural Secretariat region in geography (15,830 square kilometers) and in population (45,495). There are 43 communities, of which 28 are coastal (65%) with over 26 of the communities below 500 in population (60%). The largest community is Corner Brook, which is the western regional headquarters for the Provincial Government and the urban center for western Newfoundland and Labrador. There are five other communities of over 1000 population – Deer Lake, Pasadena, Humber Arm South, Irishtown- Summerside and Rocky Harbour.



Mandate

The mandate of the Regional Councils is:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities of a region.
- To review key regional economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, EI usage, economic diversity) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change over the next five years.
- To identify policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change.
- To advance regional cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic and social measures and to encourage regional partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- To nominate an individual to represent the region on the Provincial Council of the Rural

Secretariat.

Highlights and Accomplishments

The council was appointed in August 2005. During the remaining five months of the fiscal year, the council met on three occasions.

The first meeting of the council was held during the Dialogue Day of the Rural Secretariat Marble Mountain, Steady Brook. This meeting served as an introduction to the role and responsibilities of the council. Information presented to the councils included data on demographics, education and labor market participation. This meeting also provided an opportunity for the council to meet directly with Cabinet.

Two more meetings were held in December 2005 and in February, 2006 by the end of the fiscal year. Up to this time the council was presented with information on economic, demographic and social opportunities and challenges within the region by the Rural Secretariat. As well, the council was also presented with information on environmental issues by Sian French, Manager of Protected Areas, Parks Division, Department of Environment and Conservation.

The council established two working groups to discuss the relevance of demographics, infrastructure, and access to public and private services to regional development. The supply and demand aspects of the labor market were discussed in relation to sectors, such as post secondary education, information technology, tourism, forestry, fisheries, agrifoods and the provincial Comprehensive Regional Economic Diversification Strategy for Western Region.

To date, the Regional Council has identified strengths and assets throughout the region. It has also explored the connections and inter-relationships between work, family and leisure that support cohesive and progressive communities. The council developed an understanding of what thinking regionally means, i.e. thinking beyond one's own community to include the full geography of the region. It also realized that sustainability in all four areas of development (economic, social, environmental and cultural) are necessary if meaningful regional sustainability is to be achieved.

During the 2005-06 fiscal year, council developed an appreciation of the realities facing this region, the many strengths in the region, and our changing environment. Despite the pressing needs of today, council came to terms with its long-term focus and the importance of having a common understanding of the issues and identifying priorities that would make a difference to the future of the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour region.

Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

Collaboration

Collaboration, as the Council defines it, requires a spirit of cooperation and a willingness to make decisions that will maximize benefits for the whole and not just a piece of the whole. This kind of collaboration provides opportunities and benefits that would not otherwise be possible. It also poses a challenge for individuals to step out of their 'comfort zones' and look at issues differently.

Long-term thinking

Long-term thinking will continue to be both an opportunity and a challenge. Thinking long-term, in the context of the work of the council, provides an opportunity to set a shared goal for the region and to, collectively, define the steps required to achieve the goal. Thinking long-term will also be challenging for individuals and groups when there are immediate issues surfacing within regions.

Citizen Engagement

There is an opportunity through this process for citizens to directly influence public policy development. This citizen engagement process is a purposeful, deliberate process to engage citizens in a two-way conversation with government decision-makers. This process is not limited to the citizens that sit on the councils of the Rural Secretariat, rather there is a process for the broader citizenship to engage in a discussion about the future policy directions of government. The challenge will be to truly open our minds, listen to each other and discuss issues in a respectful manner.

Vision Development

The vision document that is being developed by the Council is not intended to achieve a final form, but rather the intention is for it to continue to be a working document. The vision document will identify what we want to see 15 to 20 years out. Today that time frame is 2022-2027. In five years time, that time frame will be 2027-2032. As priorities are accomplished new priorities will be identified. This will provide an opportunity for us to be informed about what is moving and changing in our regions, where the next opportunity will be and where the next challenge will be. It will also provide a challenge for all involved to have faith in the process and realize that it will take time until these priorities are accomplished. It takes time to make significant change and it is important for this council to remain focused on the future, even in the midst of immediate challenges.

Appendices

Strategic Directions

1. Title: Regional Partnership Development

Outcome Statement: Stronger and more dynamic regions.

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

- Partnership Development
 - Within regions
 - Between government and regions
- Forum for informed discussion and priority identification that links economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of regional sustainability.

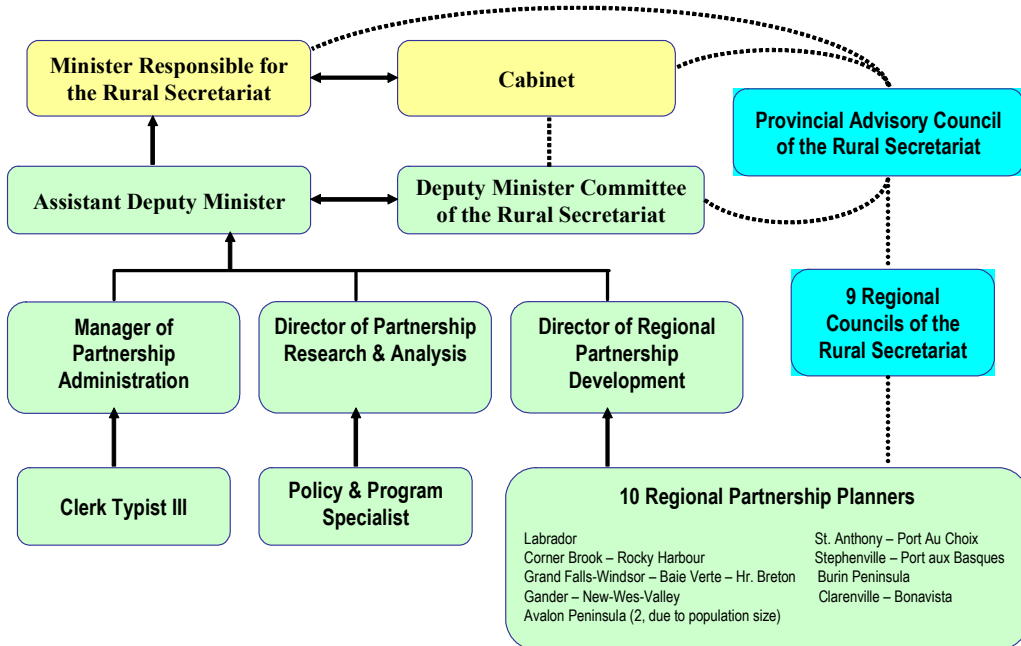
2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability

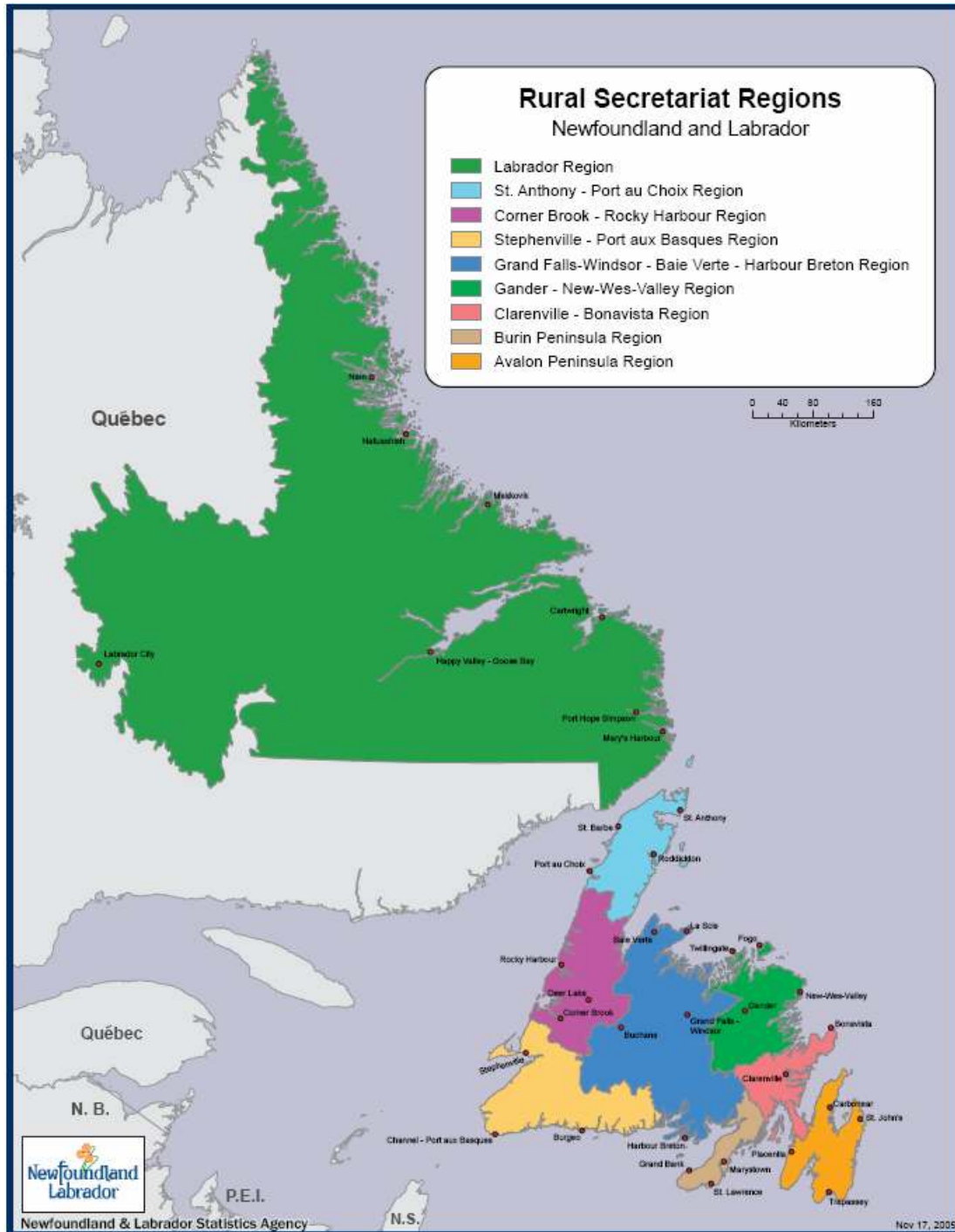
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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

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

Rural Secretariat Structure





Mandate of the Rural Secretariat

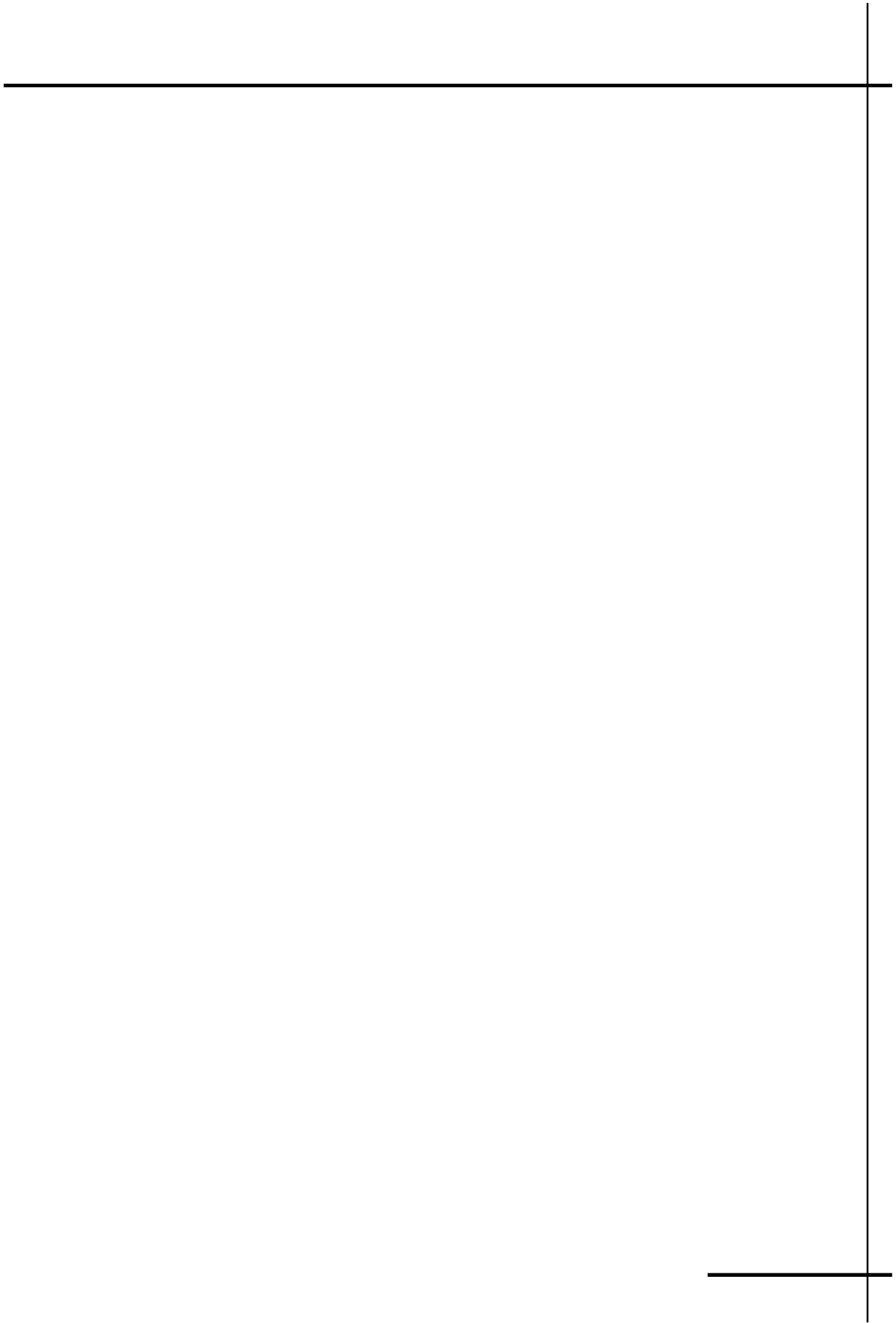
The Rural Secretariat's mandate is to:

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

Mandate of the 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.
- Review key provincial economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, EI usage, economic diversity) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change over the next five years.
- Identify and advise government on policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the five year period.
- Advance cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic and social measures, and to encourage government and community partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- Meet twice annually with the provincial Cabinet and deputy ministers to advance regional development priorities.
- Serve as an external sounding board for government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will affect provincial and regional sustainability.





Please direct correspondence for the

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www.gov.nl.ca/rural