



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



*Activity Plan  
2008-11*

## Message from the Chairperson

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The 2008-11 activity plan for the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council was prepared under the direction of the Council in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. With its release, I, on behalf of the Council assume responsibility for the preparation of the plan and for the achievement of the objectives contained therein, pursuant to section 7(4) of the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

The Regional Council believes strongly in the need for governments to be both accountable and transparent. This principle, clearly articulated in our vision document, states:

*The role of government is widely understood and accepted by community residents. It is an open and transparent government with public policy based on evidence, following informed discussion with citizens, and reflecting a shared sense of responsibility for action. Government, in partnership with regional organizations, assists business owners to access government services in a timely, organized and supportive environment by removing duplication and bridging gaps.*

In the past year, the Regional Council, through deliberations and citizen engagement, has supported the vision of the Rural Secretariat and has created its own vision document. Through this process, priorities for regional sustainability have been identified and investigated. There is a trust relationship building amongst the provincial government, citizens and stakeholders which can only be achieved when an open two-way dialogue existing between all parties.

The Regional Council, as an advisory body, is building on a regional knowledge of the economic, social, cultural and environmental potential to identify sustainable options at the regional level. This advice is intended to inform policy development and maximize opportunities in our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie Armstrong". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Debbie Armstrong, Chairperson  
Grand Falls – Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council

*Table of Contents*

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**Regional Council Overview**..... 2

**Mandate**..... 3

**Values**..... 3

**Primary Clients**..... 4

**Vision** ..... 4

**Mission**..... 5

**Goals**.....6

**Appendix A: Strategic Directions** ..... 12

**Appendix B: Organizational Structure** .....14

**Appendix C: Map of the Rural Secretariat Regions**.....15

**Appendix D: Mandates of the Rural Secretariat and Provincial Council**..... 16

## 1.0 Regional Council Overview

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The Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat is comprised of 10 members (4 female and 6 male). Members of the Council have a variety of backgrounds that include social, economic, cultural and environmental areas.

Council has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region:

Name	Community
Steward May	Belleoram
Jerry Dean	Botwood
Hubert Langdon	English Harbour West
Deborah Armstrong, Chairperson & Provincial Representative	Grand Falls-Windsor
Karen Beresford	Grand Falls-Windsor
Don Stewart	Harbour Breton
David Hayashida, Alternate Provincial Representative	King's Point
Bernice Walker	Norris Arm
Kevin Pollard	Springdale
Joan Strickland	St. Alban's

*\*For an up-to-date listing of Regional Council members 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 the facilitation of the work of the Council. The staff person for the region is Linda Brett. Linda works out of Springdale.

## 2.0 Mandate

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The Regional Council's mandate is to:

- Develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities of a region.
- 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 three years.
- Identify policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the three-year period.
- Advance regional cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about economic, cultural, environmental and social measures, and to encourage regional partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- Nominate an individual to represent the region on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat.

## 3.0 Values

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The core values explain the character of the organization we promote and the action statements guide behaviour. The core values of the Rural Secretariat, which also guide the behaviour of the Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council, are as follows:

**Core Values**  
Collaboration  
Creativity  
Empowerment  
Inclusion  
Learning Culture  
Transparency  
Trust

**Collaboration**            Each person is committed to working together effectively.

<b>Creativity</b>	Each person seeks to transcend traditional ideas, rules and patterns to create new ideas, relationships and methods.
<b>Empowerment</b>	Each person is responsible for participating in discussions, making informed decisions and taking personal responsibility for their contributions.
<b>Inclusion</b>	Each person acknowledges others' views and perspectives and has the right/opportunity to express their own.
<b>Learning Culture</b>	Each individual is recognized and valued for the skills that they bring and is encouraged to continue to learn.
<b>Transparency</b>	Each individual gives and shares open and objective advice based on sound information and principles.
<b>Trust</b>	Each person is open and supportive when participating in partnerships and follows through on requests and commitments.

## *4.0 Primary Clients*

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The primary partners of the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council include the provincial government's Rural Secretariat, its Provincial Council, and departments and agencies.

The Council will also engage in discussions with individuals, groups and organizations within the region during the course of its investigation and identification of issues pertinent to its mandate.

## *5.0 Vision*

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The vision of the Rural Secretariat is of sustainable regions with healthy, educated, prosperous people living in safe, inclusive communities.

The work of the Grand Falls-Windsor – Harbour Breton – Baie Verte Regional Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat. Through its work, the Council is identifying priorities that contribute to regional sustainability. The Council is taking an inclusive approach to sustainability that considers economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

## 6.0 Mission

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The mission statement identifies the priority focus of Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council. It represents the longer-term goals which the Council will be working towards as it moves forward on the strategic directions of the provincial government. The statement also identifies the measure and indicators that will assist both the Council and public in monitoring and evaluating the degree to which these goals are attained.

The mission statement of the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat is as follows:

**By 2011, the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will participate in an ongoing community engagement process that will show the value of two-way communications between government and citizens.**

**Measure** Participated in an ongoing community engagement process

### **Indicators**

- a long-term vision of sustainability for the region will have been submitted to the provincial government and shared with citizens
- enhanced regional input will have been provided into policy development and decision-making processes of the provincial government
- opportunities and mechanisms will have been provided to enhance two-way communication between the provincial government and citizens
- community engagement sessions will have been conducted at the regional level
- citizens and stakeholders will have been informed about the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of regional sustainability

This mission statement is written for the next three fiscal years; however, the work of Council is looking ahead 15-20 years. Advancing regional sustainability takes time and involves a considerable learning process. Citizens and the provincial government must build a stronger relationship and be willing to listen to and learn from each other.

Over the next three years, the Council will take steps to advance regional sustainability. First, regional priorities will be developed and communicated within regions and to provincial government departments. The next step will be to explore ways the Council together with regional partners and provincial government departments can work

together to advance these priorities. Over time, these priorities will change as we make accomplishments and come to new understandings of the changes that are taking place within the region.

One of the ways the Council will work with the provincial government is through representation on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat which meets directly with Cabinet and Deputy Ministers. This representative will contribute to the discussion of provincial priorities in the context of regional distinctions.

## *7.0 Goals:*

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In consideration of the Rural Secretariat's strategic directions, mandate and financial resources, the following issues have been identified as priorities for the next three years. The goals identified for each issue outline expected results at the end of the three year period and the objectives outline the annual focus. The identified measures and indicators will be used to monitor progress. Gender-based differences will be considered where applicable.

### **7.1 COMMUNICATION**

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's website states "*The Rural Secretariat acts as a focal point with governments and communities to advance the sustainable development of our region.*" To fulfil this task, the Regional Council has the mandate to identify policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary changes required for regional sustainability. Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council members understand the need for the provincial government, citizens and stakeholders to know how Council identifies, prioritizes and investigates regional issues.

#### **Goal:**

By 2011, the Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have strengthened communication with the provincial government and citizens on matters of regional and provincial interest.

**Measure:** Improved communication with citizens and the provincial government



**Indicators:**

- Regional issues and related enablers, barriers, and gaps identified;
- Established protocol in place for investigating identified regional issues;
- Communicated with the provincial government and Provincial Council on regional issues;
- Focused regional work on identified areas of interest;
- Increased collaboration with community to identify regional partners and advance citizen engagement.

**Objective 1:**

By March 31, 2009 Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have developed a protocol to guide communications with government and community stakeholders

**Measure:** Completed current planning process

**Indicators:**

- Planning cycle for established priority issues completed;
- Evaluation completed with annual reviews slated for minor modifications;
- Planning cycle revised;
- Communications protocol developed;
- Priorities re-visited and revised, as necessary;
- Improved communication and information sharing with the provincial government and community stakeholders.

**Objective 2:**

By March 31, 2010 Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have evaluated the process of establishing and investigating regional priorities and advising the provincial government.

**Objective 3:**

By March 31, 2011 Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have improved communication with the provincial government and citizen stakeholders on matters of regional and provincial interest.

## 7.2 EDUCATION

Population shifts and out-migration are tightening labour markets and causing skills shortages. Statistical analysis suggests that the size and structure of Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Region’s population is declining and aging. Council members understand the need to increase and enhance Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Region’s labour supply so as to provide a population base from which employers may draw. An investigation of education delivery from early childhood to older adulthood will address the issue of enhancing the labour supply. To date, Council has engaged in primary and secondary research, identified regional issues affecting educational delivery and have verified these concerns through citizen engagement.

### **Goal:**

By 2011, the Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have communicated an informed regional perspective on specific areas affecting education delivery.

**Measure:** Communication of an informed regional perspective on educational services will be provided to the provincial government.

### **Indicators:**

- Process established to allow regional perspectives to inform the development and implementation of public policy on the issue of education;
- Consensus by Council members on advice forwarded to the provincial government;
- Increased communications with the provincial government on educational issues;
- Increased communications amongst regional stakeholders regarding identified issues of education.

### **Objective 1:**

By March 31, 2009 Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have completed the planning cycle for education priorities, including examination of potential models and processes for rural education delivery.

**Measure:** Communication of an informed regional perspective on educational services.

### **Indicators:**

- Research data collected and reviewed on issue of education;
- Identified and engaged with citizens and stakeholders on issues identified in education priority;
- Consensus developed on advice to be forwarded to the provincial government;
- Advice communicated to the provincial government;

**Objective 2:**

By March 31, 2010, Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have engaged with citizens and stakeholders to communicate on identified educational issues.

**Objective 3:**

- By March 31, 2011, Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have engaged the provincial government on specific issues related to education.

### 7.3 AQUACULTURE

Grand Falls –Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Region is the focal point for aquaculture development in Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2006, the total export value was \$52.3 million employing 370 individuals and the industry continues to expand rapidly. Council members realize that aquaculture is an economic driver for rural Newfoundland and Labrador and understand the need for the provincial government and community supports in this developing industry.

**Goal:**

By 2011, the Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have communicated an informed perspective on regional sustainability in developing the aquaculture industry.

**Measure:** Informed communication with the provincial government on aquaculture development.

**Indicators:**

- Regional research completed;
- Consensus developed on findings;
- Identified and prioritized aquaculture issues as they pertain to regional sustainability;
- Increased collaboration to identify regional partners and advance citizen engagement;
- Options identified in relation to current government services, strategies, policies on work to date or future directions;
- Increased communications with the provincial government and Provincial Council.

**Objective 1:**

By March 31, 2009 Grand Falls -Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have identified specific issues related to aquaculture.

**Measure:** Specific issues identified.

**Indicators:**

- Presentations and literature review initiated;
- Increased collaboration and improved communication and information sharing with the provincial government, industry partners and citizen stakeholders;
- Aquaculture issues identified.

**Objective 2:**

By March 31, 2010 Grand Falls -Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have collected and studied sufficient information to prioritize aquaculture issues pertaining to regional sustainability.

**Objective 3:**

By March 31, 2011 Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have communicated an informed regional perspective on aquaculture development as it relates to regional sustainability.

## 7.4 HEALTH CARE

Statistical analysis suggests that the size and structure of Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Region’s population is reducing and aging. In addition, it is the largest region on the island portion of the province with most communities located in a rural or remote environment. Both factors have placed significant pressure on the cost and delivery of health services. In order to provide quality and timely health care Council members understand the need for innovative models in health care delivery.

**Goal:**

By 2011 Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have developed an informed regional perspective on regional health care in relation to sustainability.

**Measure:** Development of an informed regional perspective on health services.

**Indicators:**

- Regional research completed;
- Issues identified;
- Priorities identified in relation to provincial government strategies and regional

- practices;
- Consensus developed and communicated to the provincial government, citizens and stakeholders.

**Objective 1:**

By March 31, 2009 Grand Falls -Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have discussed issues related to health care

**Measure:** Specific issues identified.

**Indicators:**

- Presentations and literature review initiated;
- Increased collaboration and improved communication and information sharing with the provincial government, industry partners and citizen stakeholders;
- Regional health service issues identified.

**Objective 2:**

By March 31, 2010 Grand Falls -Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have completed research related to regional health services as it relates to regional sustainability.

**Objective 3:**

By March 31, 2011 Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Regional Council will have initiated citizen engagement activities to refine regional position regarding regional health services.

## 8.0 Appendix A

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### Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one Government entity. These directions are generally communicated by Government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents, and other communiqués. The Transparency and Accountability Act requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across Government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The directions related to the Rural Secretariat are as follows:

**1. Title: Regional Partnership Development**

**Outcome Statement:** Stronger and more dynamic regions.

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

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

Components of Strategic Direction	Included in activity plan
a. Partnership Development within regions, between the provincial government and regions	✓
b. 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**

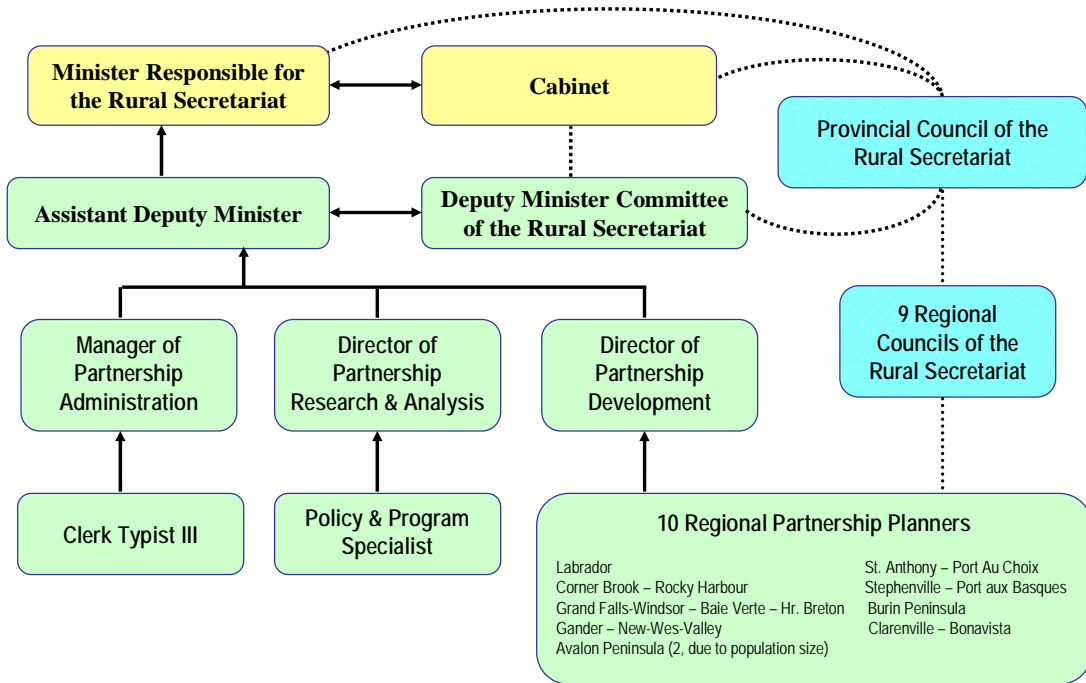
**Outcome Statement:** Improved provincial government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

**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.

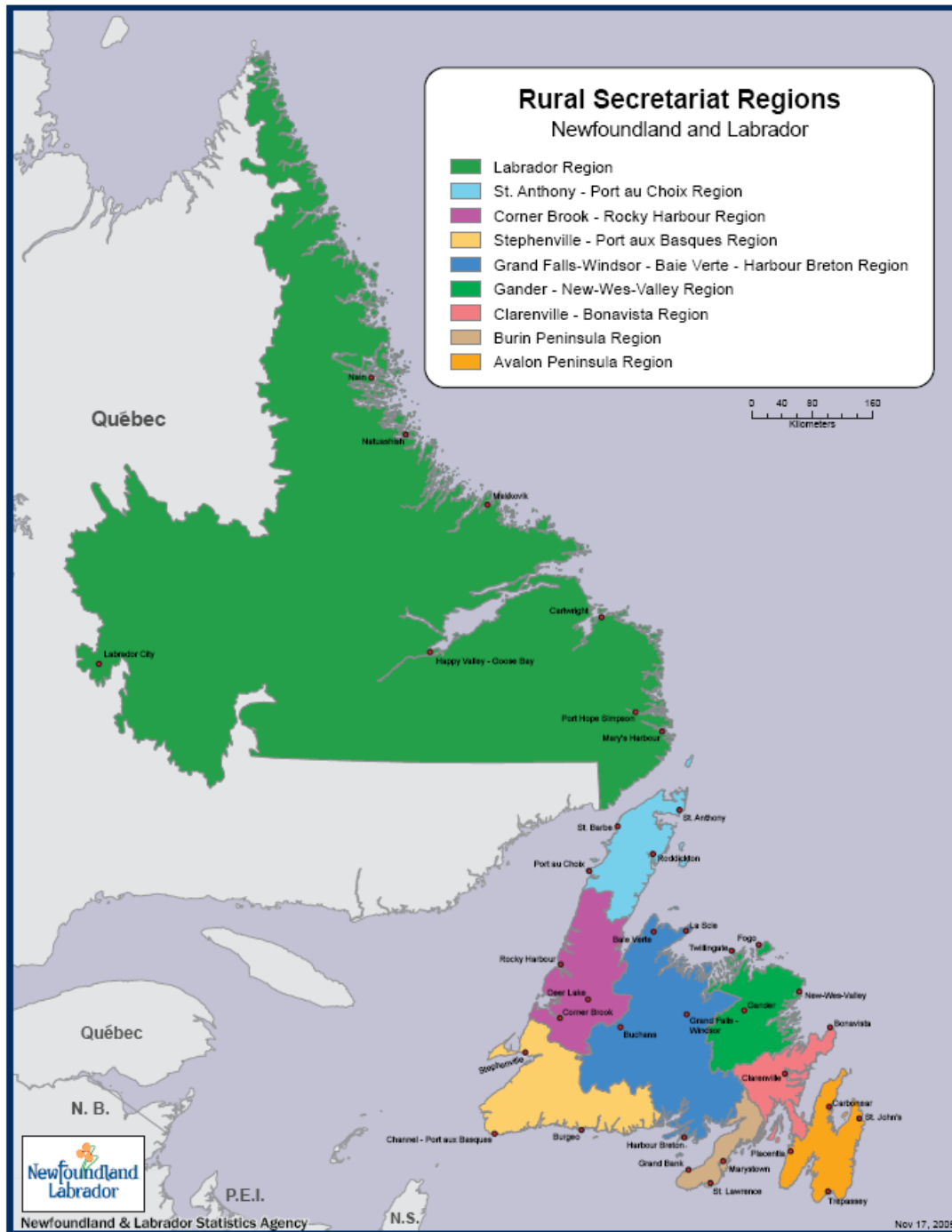
Components of Strategic Direction	Included in activity plan
Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy.	✓

# Rural Secretariat Structure





## 10.0 Appendix C



## 11.0 Appendix D

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### **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.

### **Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat**

#### ***Provincial Council Mandate:***

- 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, EI usage, economic diversity) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change over the next five years.
- To identify and advise government on policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or 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 government and community partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- To meet twice annually with the provincial Cabinet and deputy ministers to advance regional development priorities.
- To serve as an external sounding board for government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will affect provincial and regional sustainability.

## 12.0 PHOTO CREDITS:



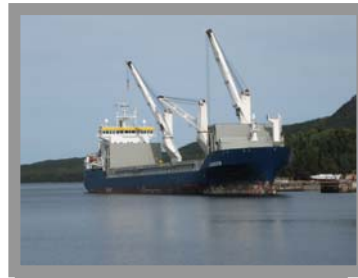
Westport  
Photo Compliments of Linda Brett



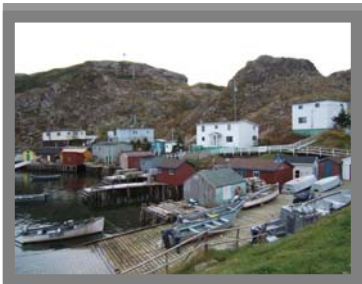
Grand Falls-Windsor  
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Glovers Harbour  
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South Brook  
Photo Compliments of Linda Brett



McCallum  
Photo Compliments of Roberta Collier



Botwood  
Photo Compliments of Mary Snow



## *Rural Secretariat*

Executive Council

Linda Brett

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