



*Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour
Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat
Executive Council
Annual Activity Report 2009-10*



Message from the Co-Chairs

As Chairpersons for the Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Regional Council, we hereby submit the annual activity report for the 2009-10 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 achieved.

We consider that this Regional Council has had a relatively successful year in establishing and working with the goals for the region. Unfortunately, because of the absence of a planner in the region from early fall 2009 until May 2010, we have not moved as quickly on stated initiatives as we would have liked. With the hiring of a planner in May 2010, we are confident this can be quickly rectified.

If we consider Health and Education, for example, we have made substantial progress in solidifying our interests among the stakeholders in the region. We have held a variety of successful meetings and forums to establish details as to what people consider important, related to our key regional priorities. With respect to Transportation, we have had correspondence with government reiterating the significance that we place on this important focus of our attention in this region. Included in this initiative is an emphasis on establishing broadband access for all communities in the region, in establishing a fixed link from the island portion of the province to Labrador and in improving the ferry service between the island of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, among others.

This Regional Council has made its intentions quite clear as to our priorities in this regard in the region; we now intend to make the appropriate recommendations to government with respect to helping shape policy in these major areas.

Sincerely,



Don Downer

and Colleen Kennedy

Co-Chairs

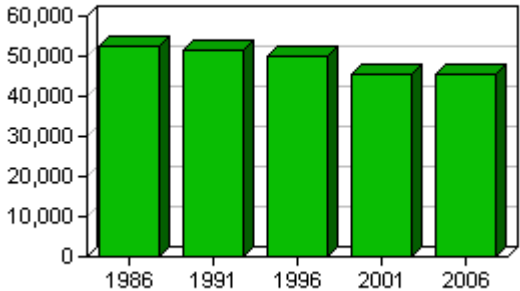
Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

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1. Overview of the Region

Population



The 2006 Census population for Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region was 45,730. This represents an increase of 0.5% since 2001. Over the same period, the entire province experienced a population decline of 1.5% since 2001 (505,470 in 2006, down from 512,930).

The 2006 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region was \$21,700. For the province, personal income per capita was \$22,900. After

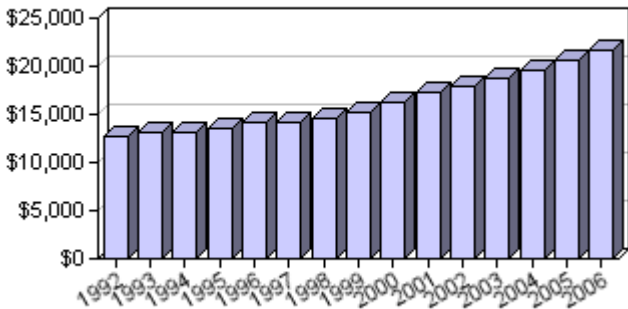
tax personal income per capita, adjusted for inflation, was \$14,400 for Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region in 2006. For the province it was \$14,900.

Half of the couple families in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region had incomes of more than \$53,600 in 2006. Half of the couple families in the province had incomes of more than \$56,500.

Half of the lone-parent families in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region had incomes of less than \$25,000 in 2006. Half of the lone-parent families in the province had incomes of less than \$25,300.

The 2006 self-reliance ratio for Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region was 76.5%. This is a measure of the community's dependency on government transfers such as: Canada Pension, Old Age Security, Employment Insurance, Income Support Assistance, etc. The higher the percentage of income that comes from transfers, the lower the self-reliance ratio. The provincial self-reliance ratio for 2006 was 78.5%.

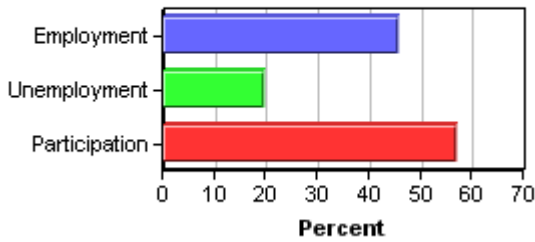
Personal Income Per Capita



According to the 2006 Census, in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region 79.3% of homes were owned versus rented compared to 78.7% for the province and 68.4% for Canada.

The unemployment rate for May 2006 for people aged 15 and older was 19.5%. The provincial unemployment rate was 18.6%.

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



The employment rate for the entire year 2005 for those aged 15 and older was 61.5%. The provincial employment rate for the same period was 63.2%.

The number of individuals in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region who received Income Support Assistance at some point in the year 2008 was 4,245. The 1991 figure was 7,945.

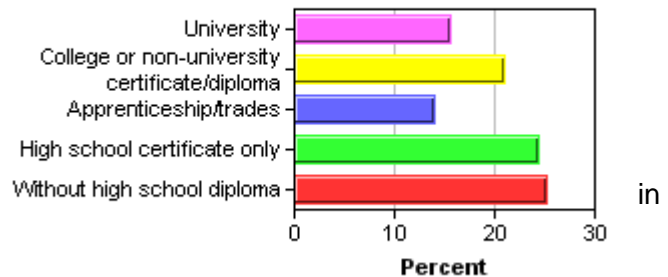
The total number of children ages 0 to 17 in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region who were in families on Income Support Assistance in 2008 was 1,245. The figure for 1991 was 3,145.

Census 2006 reported that 25.1% of people 18 to 64 years of age in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region do not have a high school diploma compared to 25.1% of people in the entire province.

In Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region about 14.3% of people aged 25 to 54 had a Bachelor's Degree or higher in 2006 compared to 15.1% in the province as a whole.

In 2006, in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region, 87.2% of people 25 to 34 years of age had at least a high school diploma. This compares to 85.4% the entire province and 89.1% for Canada.

Highest Level of Education, Pop 18 to 64



A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2005, 60.6% of individuals in Corner Brook - Rocky Harbour Rural Secretariat Region rated their health status from very good to excellent. The provincial number in 2005 was 64.5%. In 2005, for Canada, 60.2% of individuals age 12 and over rated their health status as very good to excellent.

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

2. Regional Council Overview

The Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council is comprised of seven members; four female and three male. The Council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities

throughout the region, including three members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The Council met three times in 2009-10.

Regional Council members	Community
Bertha Brophy	Daniel's Harbour
Joan Cranston	Norris Point
Don Downer (Co-Chair)	Corner Brook
Philip Hicks	Corner Brook
Colleen Kennedy (Co-Chair)	Rocky Harbour
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 Rural Secretariat also funds a regional planner position in the region, who among other duties, act as an information resource for the Council and facilitates the work of the Council. Until September 2009 the planner for the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour region was Greg Wood, however the position remained vacant for the remainder of the fiscal year. The regional office is located with the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development Offices in the Millbrook Mall, Corner Brook.

The Council does not have a budget and, as such, an audited financial statement is not required in this report. Meetings of the Council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Rural Secretariat.

3. Mandate

The Regional Council mandate 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 over the five year period.
- 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.

4. Lines of Business

The Council supports the Rural Secretariat's two lines of business.

- **Partnership Development:** The Rural Secretariat coordinates the development of partnerships that focus on sustainable regional development and provides direct consideration of citizens' and stakeholders' priorities, perspectives and expectations in the development of public policy, infrastructure and other financial decisions, and other provincial government action that impacts regions and rural areas.
- **Formulation and provision of policy advice and analysis with respect to regions and rural areas:** The Rural Secretariat coordinates research and analysis on regional and rural socio-economic issues, provides advice and analysis on legislative, financial, policy, program and service delivery matters that impact regions and rural areas. It also influences and informs cross-departmental analysis and evidence-based decision making with respect to regional and rural challenges and opportunities.

5. Values

The core values explain the character of the organization. These values are paramount to the mandate and activities of the Council and are as follows:

Collaboration	Each person is committed to working together effectively
Creativity	Each person seeks and supports new ideas and approaches
Empowerment	Each person is responsible for participating in discussions, making informed decisions and taking personal responsibility for their contributions
Inclusion	Each person acknowledges others' views and perspectives and has the right/opportunity to express their own
Learning Culture	Each individual is recognized and valued for the skills that they bring and is encouraged to continue to learn
Transparency	Each individual gives and shares open and objective advice based on sound information and principles

Trust

Each person is open and supportive when participating in partnerships and follows through on requests and commitments

6. Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Regional Council include the Rural Secretariat, the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat, and departments and agencies within the provincial government, among others.

The Council will also engage individuals, groups and organizations within the region as it carries out its work.

7. Vision

The Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat:

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

Through its work, the council is identifying priorities that contribute to regional sustainability which considers economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.

8. Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the council. It represents the key long-term objective that the council will be striving towards as they move forward with their work. The priority focus areas support the strategic directions of the Provincial Government. The statement also identifies the indicators that will assist both the Council and the public in monitoring and evaluating success. The council will report on its mission statement in its 2010-11 Annual Report.

The mission statement of the Council is as follows:

By 2011, the Council will have participated in an ongoing community engagement process that will demonstrate the value of two-way communication between the provincial government and citizens.

9. Report on Performance

In its 2008-11 Activity Plan the council identified three goals. The activities and performance of the council with respect to each of the goals as outlined below, is in support of the provincial government’s strategic directions for the Rural Secretariat (Appendix A). In particular, the council’s performance allowed for the development of new partnerships with various stakeholders at the regional level, and provided a new regional forum to discuss citizens’ perspectives on regional and rural sustainability. The council recognizes that these strategic directions are long term in nature and believes that its activities in 2009-10 and beyond will further support these directions.

9.1 Issue 1: Access to quality transportation infrastructure and services

In order to develop, maintain and increase rural competitiveness in a local and global economy, the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council recognized the necessity of having access to safe, efficient and modern transportation infrastructure and services, inclusive of air, land and marine services. This has increased relevance for tourism, manufacturing and overall social and economic development in the region.

Goal: By 2011, the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have informed Provincial Government policy on issues related to access to air, land and marine transportation.

2009-10 Objective: By 2010 Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have engaged community partners and the provincial government concerning access to quality air, land and marine transportation infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

Measure: Community partners and the provincial government engagements conducted concerning access to quality air, land and marine transportation infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
Community engagement sessions held in the region with broad stakeholder representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The original intent behind this indicator was to carry out further community engagement sessions within our area’s sub-regions. However due to the lack of a planner, this indicator was not fully achieved and Council decided to submit policy advice based on the stakeholder engagement at the transportation forum and subsequent meetings with key stakeholders such as the Regional Economic Development Boards. ✓ In addition to the Transportation Forum and within this activity reporting year, the planner and a Council member participated in a meeting with the Red Ochre Regional Board Inc. where

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
	<p>transportation was a key discussion topic. Issues highlighted included: access to airports, cost of travel, highway infrastructure and ferry services. This meeting encompassed broad stakeholder engagement due to the membership of the economic development board, which includes wide regional and community representation.</p>
<p>Community stakeholder data collected regarding air, land and marine transportation infrastructure and services requirements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The original intent behind this indicator was to carry out further information gathering to supplement the information received during the transportation forum. However, due to the lack of a planner, this indicator was not fully achieved and Council decided to submit policy advice based on the information gathered at the transportation forum and subsequent meetings with key stakeholders such as the Regional Economic Development Boards.
<p>Engagement with Transportation and Works to determine opportunities and challenges for maintaining and improving access to quality air, land and marine transportation infrastructure and services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The council submitted a position paper to the Minister for Transportation and Works in September 2009. This paper highlighted key issues identified during the Transportation Forum (held September 19-20, 2008) and associated follow-up with stakeholders. The paper included reference to air, land and marine infrastructure and highlighted as key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The need for improvements and revitalization of the existing Marine Atlantic ferry service. ➤ The requirement for a full scale feasibility study on the fixed link between Newfoundland and Labrador ➤ The requirement for widening of Route 430 (Viking Trail) to allow for passing lanes, particularly given the anticipated increase in traffic, as a result of the opening of the Trans-Labrador Highway. ➤ The desire to see enhanced international air services from Deer Lake to improve the attractiveness of the airport for business, tourism and domestic travel. ✓ Council received a response to their advice document in October 2009, however due to the lack of a planner; they were unable to engage with Transportation and Works to follow up on the advice document and to determine further

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
	opportunities and challenges related to accessing to transportation services and infrastructure. Council will accomplish this indicator within the 2010-11 activity period.

As the submission of a position paper to government was the objective for 2010-11, which council accomplished in 2009-10; Council has added additional indicators for the 2010-11 activity period. These include continuing to update data on regional transportation by liaising with key regional representatives and reviewing new research and planning related to transportation. Based on this information gathering; where significant new transportation issues or opportunities are identified, Council will draft and submit further policy advice to government.

2010-11 Objective: By 2011 Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have developed and communicated a position paper to the provincial government concerning access to quality air, land and marine transportation infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

2010-11 Measure: Communicated a position paper to the provincial government concerning access to quality air, land and marine transportation infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

2010-11 Indicators:

- Position paper communicated to the provincial government
- Invite key stakeholders to meet with Council
- Review new and on-going transportation research and relevant strategic plans

9.2 Issue 2: Regionalism – Ensuring access to quality education infrastructure and services

The ability of a rural region to be economically competitive in a local and global market place requires a population that is of sufficient size, sufficiently educated, and which offers a diversity of skills to meet the supply and demand of the labour market. The Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council recognized that in order to retain and attract people, quality of life issues are a significant part of the decision to settle in an area. This includes access to quality education infrastructure and services.

Goal:

By 2011 the Corner Brook – Rocky-Harbour Regional Council will have informed provincial government policy on issues related to regional decision making on education infrastructure and services

2009-10 Objective:

By 2010 Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have engaged community partners

concerning regional decision making as it relates to access to quality education infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

Measure:

Community partner engagement conducted on regional decision making as it relates to access to quality education infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
<p>Community engagement sessions held in the region with broad stakeholder representation</p>	<p>✓ The original intent behind this indicator was to carry out further community engagement sessions within our area's sub-regions. However, due to the lack of a planner, this indicator was not achieved. Due to time constraints, Council will not carry out this indicator in 2010-2011, but will base its policy advice on information gathered at the education forum (which included a wide range of regional stakeholders) and on subsequent follow-up with key education organisations, such as the College of the North Atlantic, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College and Western Regional School District.</p>
<p>Community stakeholder data collected regarding education infrastructure and services requirements</p>	<p>✓ Stakeholder data from the education community was collected during the education forum. This included information on key rural education issues such a declining school enrolments, school consolidation, community school concept, bussing, small school program offerings and on-line learning. Participants focused on identifying key challenges and opportunities in the areas of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Families, communities and education 2) Educational access and infrastructure 3) Primary, elementary and secondary education 4) Education programs for rural regions 5) Digital learning and infrastructure 6) Post-secondary education. <p>✓ Further information related to education was collected from presentations to Council by key regional stakeholders from the education community, including the College of the North Atlantic, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College and Academy Canada. This included an overview of each institution, key priorities and challenges, along with the identification of future opportunities and developments.</p>

Based on these accomplishments, Council will work toward the following measure and indicators for its 2010-11 objective.

2010-11 Objective:

By 2011 Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have developed and communicated a position paper to the provincial government concerning regional decision making as it relates to access to quality education infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

2010-11 Measure:

- Position Paper developed and communicated to the provincial government concerning regional decision making as it relates to access to quality education infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability

2010-11 Indicators:

- Position paper developed
- Position paper communicated to provincial government

9.3 Issue 3: Regionalism – Ensuring access to quality health infrastructure and services

Access to health infrastructure and services affects the quality of life of every citizen in the region. In some cases, citizens are often forced to make choices between their personal or family health and providing for basic needs. Travel to health service centres puts real and immediate demands on the social and economic resources of families, especially in rural areas. The Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council recognized that quality of life issues are a significant part of the decision to settle or remain in an area, including access to quality health infrastructure and services.

Goal:

By 2011 the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have informed Provincial Government policy on issues related to regional decision making as it relates to accessing health infrastructure and services.

2009-10 Objective:

By 2010 Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have engaged community partners concerning regional decision making as it relates to access to quality health infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

Measure:

Community partner engagement conducted on regional decision making as it relates to access to quality health infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
Community engagement sessions held in the region with broad stakeholder representation	✓ The Council held an initial meeting with key Western Health staff including the Primary Healthcare manager, Regional Director for Health Promotion and Primary Healthcare. The meeting

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
	<p>introduced the role of the Rural Secretariat, discussed potential opportunities for research partnering, key community health initiatives and community engagement on health issues.</p> <p>✓ Due to the absence of a planner from September onwards, this indicator was not fully accomplished.</p>
Community stakeholder data collected regarding health care infrastructure and services requirements	<p>✓ Due to the absence of a planner from September onward this indicator was not accomplished</p> <p>✓ Council will accomplish this indicator in 2010-11</p>
Information regarding regional decision making models and issues gathered and analyzed	<p>✓ Due to the absence of a planner from September onward this indicator was not accomplished</p> <p>✓ Council will accomplish this indicator in 2010-11</p>

Based on these accomplishments, it will work toward the following measure and indicators for its 2010-11 objective.

2010-11 Objective: By March 31, 2011 Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour Regional Council will have developed and communicated a position paper to the provincial government concerning regional decision making as it relates to access to quality health infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

2010-11 Measure: Position paper developed and communicated to the provincial government concerning regional decision making as it relates to access to quality health infrastructure and services required for regional sustainability.

2010-11 Indicators:

- Community stakeholder data collected regarding health care infrastructure and services requirements
- Information regarding regional decision making models and issues gathered and analyzed
- Position paper developed and submitted to government

10. Additional Highlights

The Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour Regional Council is seeking to broaden public dialogue on long-term opportunities and challenges facing the region. It aims to provide input and advice to the provincial government on these opportunities and challenges. This is a long term process that will require ongoing collaboration with citizens, stakeholders and interests in the region.

The council feels that its performance in 2009-10 has allowed it to make advancements in this process. The council is providing an open and transparent means for rural perceptions, realities,

opportunities, challenges and potential solutions to be discussed, debated and deliberated. It has brought together citizens, stakeholders and interests from various backgrounds with differing priorities and perspectives, differing bases of information and knowledge, and varying expectations. It has built confidence, leadership and trust, and it has broadened public awareness of issues.

In addition to the points raised in Section 9, three additional highlights are worthy of mention. These are consistent with the Rural Secretariat's strategic directions and mandate, and will serve to inform the work of the council in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

- The Regional Council held several organic gardening forums throughout the region, the purpose of which was to assess the current knowledge-base/practices related to general agriculture and organic agriculture in the Corner Brook – Rocky Harbour region (as a pilot). This aimed to stimulate thinking about sustainable agricultural practices and to promote these practices within the region.
- In February 2010, Regional Council members participated in a pan provincial video conference with all nine regional councils. The event focused on citizen engagement as the broad topic. The meeting utilized video conference equipment from the College of North Atlantic at 10 locations across the province as well as Turning Point Technologies, an audience response polling technology. This meeting in part was a test case to begin to see how such a model could work for cross regional discussion and dialogue.
- The Regional Council has also been involved with the development of a Fisheries Tourism Forum in the Bonne Bay region, in partnership with the Community - University Research for Recovery Alliance (CURRA), based at the Bonne Bay Marine Station. This Forum and the associated working group aim to initiate projects within the region, to link inshore fishery and tourism activities, with the end result of enhanced community sustainability

11. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

As the nature of the work of the Council is broad-based and long-term in nature, the challenges and opportunities faced by the Council remain fairly similar from year to year. It feels that these challenges and opportunities can be categorized along three themes.

Provision of Policy Advice to government

The council's mandate commits it to reaching consensus on the priorities for change in its region and to identifying policies and programs to encourage desired change. The challenge for council, given the range of issues, perspectives, interests and needs within its region, is to reach consensus on priorities for change and on policy advice to provide to government. The opportunity for council is to position itself as an objective, informed and influential advisory body within the region that can both provide informed bottom-up policy advice to government as well as respond to top-down policy level requests from government that may impact on the region.

Regional collaboration

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

Regional communications

The council understands that a range of non-governmental organizations in rural areas provide advice to government on a range of policy matters. In large part, these organizations are focused on particular agendas, needs and interests, among others, regional economic development, environmental awareness and protection, social policy advancement and municipal governance. The challenge for it is to openly and positively communicate its mandate and role to 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 it, through new and strengthened relationships with regional stakeholders, 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

Strategic Directions

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

1. Title: Regional Partnership Development

Outcome Statement: Stronger and more dynamic regions.

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

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

2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability

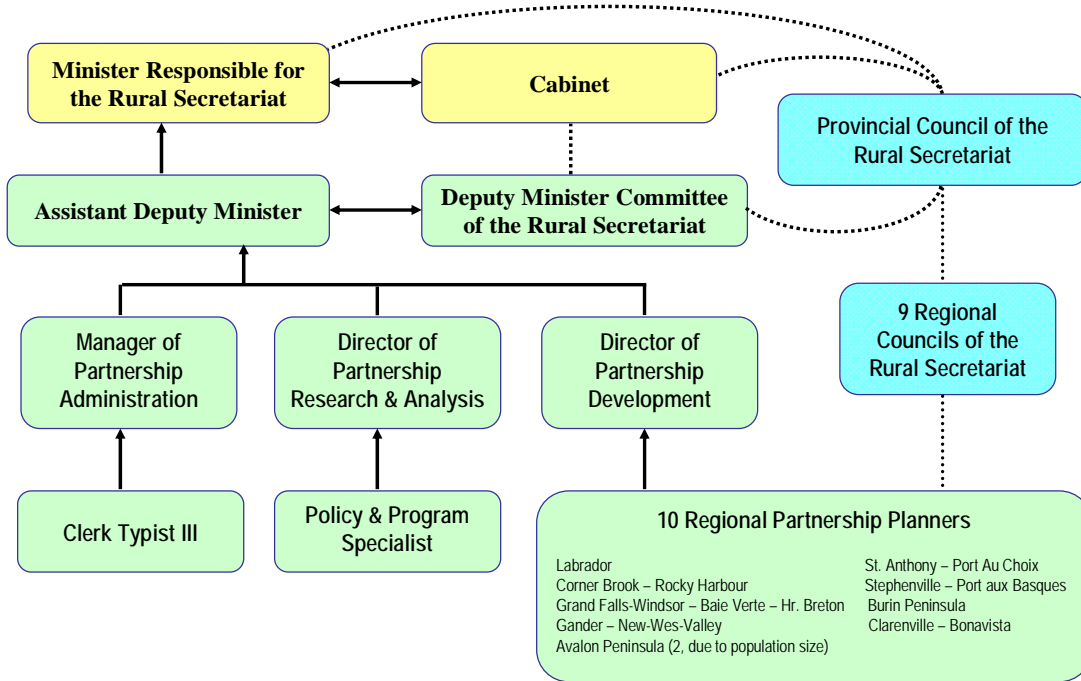
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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

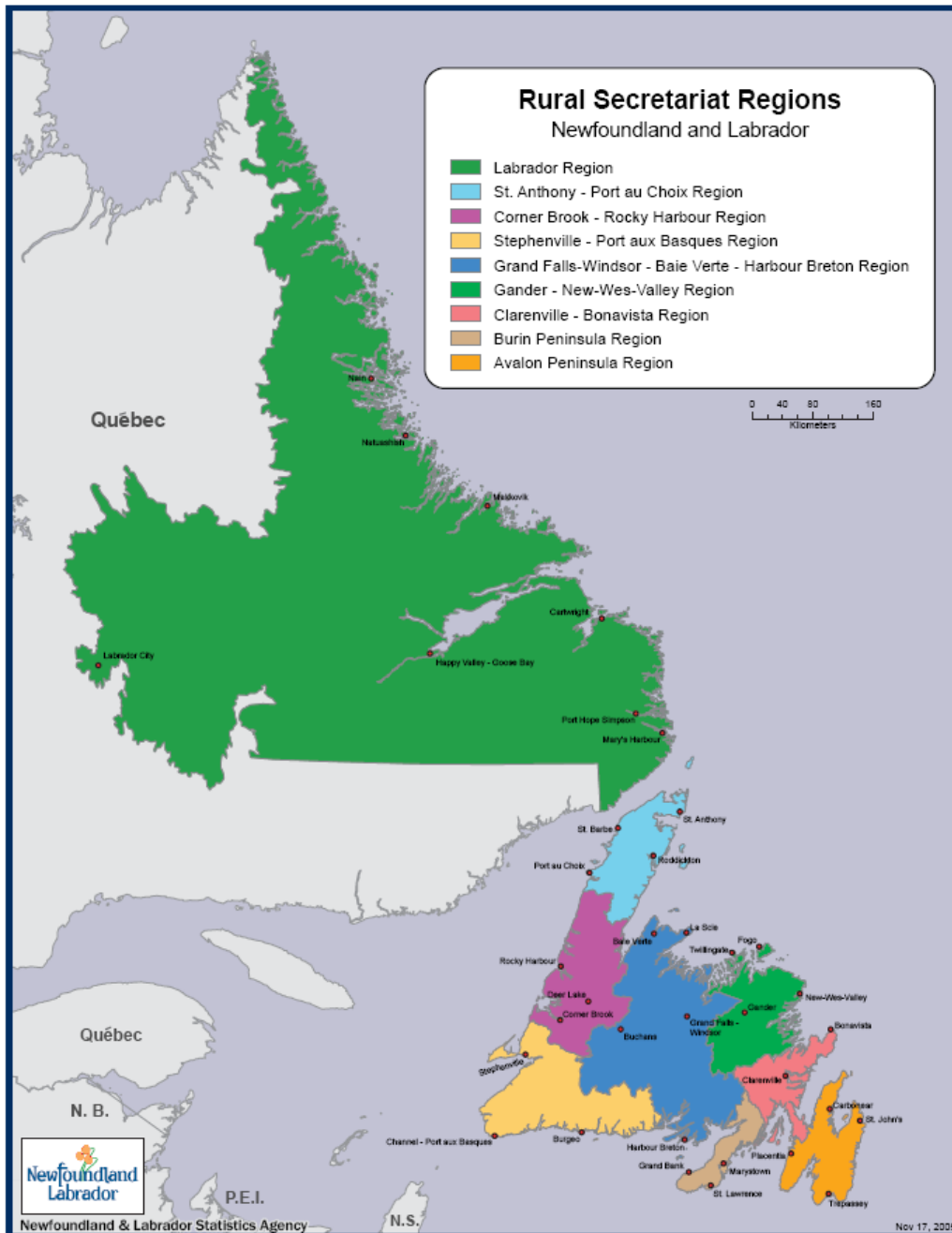
- Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy

Appendix B: Organizational Structure

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions



Appendix D: Mandate of Rural Secretariat and Regional Councils

Mandate of the Rural Secretariat

The Rural Secretariat's mandate is to:

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

Mandate of the 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.
- To identify and advise the provincial government on policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change.
- 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.
- 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.

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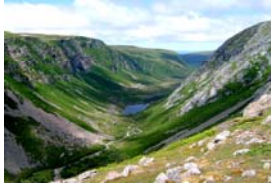


Photo Courtesy of Greg Wood



Photo Courtesy of Greg Dominaux



Photo Courtesy of Greg Wood



Photo Courtesy of Trail Canada



Rural Secretariat

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