



*Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat  
Executive Council  
Activity Report 2009-10*



# Message from the Chair

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As Chairperson for the Provincial Council, I 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*, my signature is indicative of the council's accountability for the results achieved.

In the past year, Provincial Council has finalized a position paper on Regional Collaboration. The council spent the majority of the year reviewing the research completed by an external consultant and engaging Regional Councils in providing input and feedback into the draft document. The Council has a policy advice document developed to be submitted to government within the first quarter of the 2010-2011 year.

The subcommittee on land use planning has engaged Regional Councils in providing input and feedback into the position and background paper on land use planning. The subcommittee plans on broadening its engagement on the paper with stakeholders and government in the coming year to finalize an advice document to government.

In addition, the Provincial Council has activated its work on three additional priority areas: food security, green issues and voluntary and not for profit sector. The food security subcommittee has developed a draft position paper. The green issues and the voluntary and not for profit sector subcommittees are in the preliminary stages of development and will develop its focus area in the 2010-2011 year.

Over the coming year, the Provincial Council will initiate an engagement process to assist them in refining their areas of focus and to gather input and feedback into the development of advice documents to be submitted to government.

The work of the Provincial Council over the past year has seen many accomplishments and we look forward to the work ahead in the 2010-2011 year.

Sincerely,



Sheila Kelly-Blackmore  
Chair  
Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat

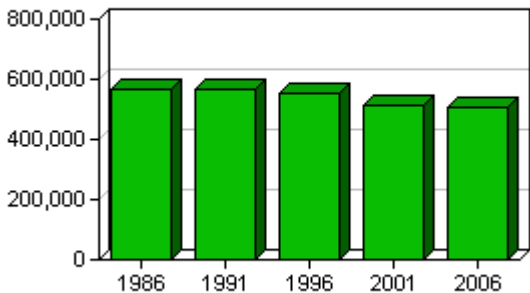
# Table of Contents

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1. Provincial Overview .....	3
2. Provincial Council Overview .....	4
3. Mandate .....	5
4. Lines of Business .....	6
5. Values .....	6
6. Primary Clients.....	7
7. Vision .....	7
8. Mission.....	7
9. Report on Performance.....	8
10. Additional Highlights .....	12
11. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead .....	12
Appendix A: Strategic Directions .....	14
Appendix B: Organizational Structure.....	15
Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions .....	16
Appendix D: Mandate of Rural Secretariat and Regional Councils .....	17

# 1. Provincial Overview

**Population**



The 2006 Census population for Newfoundland and Labrador was 505,470. This represents a decline of 1.5% since 2001.

The 2006 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in Newfoundland and Labrador was \$22,900. For Canada, it was \$28,900 in 2006. After tax personal income per capita, adjusted for inflation, was \$14,900 for Newfoundland and Labrador in 2006.

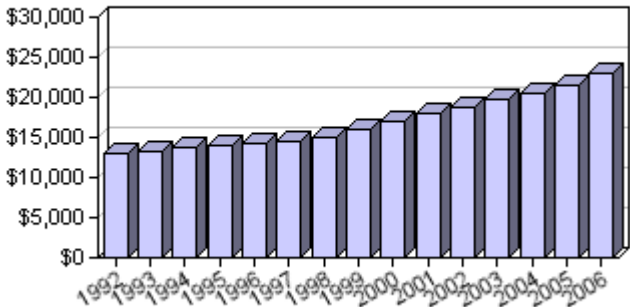
Half of the couple families in Newfoundland and Labrador had incomes of more than \$56,500 in 2006.

Half of the lone-parent families in Newfoundland and Labrador had incomes of less than \$25,300 in 2006.

According to the 2006 Census, in Newfoundland and Labrador 78.7% of homes were owned versus rented compared to 68.4% for Canada.

According to the 2001 Census, the average value of dwellings in Newfoundland and Labrador was \$76,285. The Canadian average was \$162,710 in 2001. In Newfoundland and Labrador, in 2001, 78.2% of homes were owned versus rented compared to 65.6% for Canada.

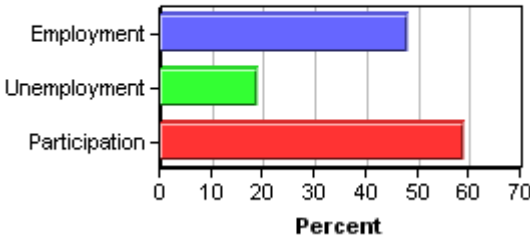
**Personal Income Per Capita**



The 2006 self-reliance ratio for Newfoundland and Labrador was 78.5%. 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 unemployment rate for May 2006 for people aged 15 and older was 18.6%. The employment rate for the entire year 2005 for those aged 15 and older was 63.3%.

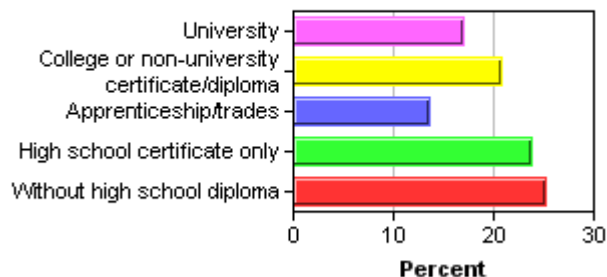
**Labour Market Rates  
Population 15 and Older  
(May 2006)**



The number of individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador who received Income Support Assistance at some point in the year 2008 was 50,005. The 1991 figure was 93,025.

The total number of children ages 0 to 17 in Newfoundland and Labrador who were in families on Income Support Assistance in 2008 was 13,575. The figure for 1991 was 35,735.

### Highest Level of Education, Pop 18 to 64



Census 2006 reported 25.1% of people 18 to 64 years of age in Newfoundland and Labrador do not have a high school diploma.

In Newfoundland and Labrador about 15.1% of people aged 25 to 54 had a Bachelor's Degree or higher in 2006.

In 2006, in Newfoundland and Labrador, 85.4% of people 25 to 34 years of age had at least a high school diploma. This compares to 89.1% for Canada.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2005, 64.5% of individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador rated their health status from very good to excellent. 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](http://www.communityaccounts.ca) and [www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural](http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural).

## 2. Provincial Council Overview

The Provincial Council is comprised of 13 members; nine female and four male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the province, including ten members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met five times in 2009-10.

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.

Provincial Council required research to be conducted on an area of work around Regionalism. This resulted in a call for proposals and the hiring of a consultant to complete the work. Funds were made available from the existing provincial office budget.

Provincial Council members	Community
<b>Chair</b>	
Sheila Kelly-Blackmore	Sandy Cove
<b>At-Large Members</b>	
Donna Butt	Trinity
Penelope Rowe	St. John's
Ernest Simms	St. Anthony

Kara Snow	St. Anthony
<b>Regional Representatives</b>	
Deborah Armstrong (Grand Falls-Windsor-Baie Verte-Harbour Breton) Alternate: David Hayashida	Grand Falls-Windsor King's Point
James Farrell (Labrador) Alternate: Lori O'Brien	Wabush L'Anse au Loup
Nadine Decker (Gander-NewWesValley) Alternate: David Regular	Fogo Island Summerford
Pamela Ghent (Burin Peninsula) Alternate: Michael Graham	Harbour Mille Burin
Colleen Kennedy (Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour) Alternate: Don Downer	Rocky Harbour Corner Brook
Ted Lewis (St. Anthony-Port au Choix) Alternate: Gloria Toope	Croque Plum Point
Kerry Murray (Avalon Peninsula) Alternate: Maureen Sullivan	Conception Bay South Calvert
Calvin White (Stephenville-Port aux Basques) Alternate: Eric Legge	Flat Bay Cartyville
Merv Wiseman (Clarenville-Bonavista) Alternate: Marilyn Coles-Hayley	North Harbour Elliston

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

### 3. Mandate

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The Provincial Council 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 Income 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.
- 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.
- 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.

## 4. Lines of Business

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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

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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:

<b>Collaboration</b>	Each person is committed to working together effectively.
<b>Creativity</b>	Each person seeks and supports new ideas and approaches.
<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.

## 6. Primary Clients

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The primary clients of the Provincial Council include the Rural Secretariat, the Regional Councils of the Rural Secretariat, Cabinet and Deputy Ministers and the Provincial Government.

The council also engages with officials of departments and agencies of the provincial government as well as individuals, groups and organizations in the province.

## 7. Vision

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The Provincial 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

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The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the council. It represents the key longer-term result 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 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 Provincial Council will have reviewed the work of each Regional Council in order to have developed a common understanding of the province's economic, social, cultural and environmental realities, as well as regional commonalities and differences.**



## 9. Report on Performance

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In its 2008-11 Activity Plan the council identified two 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: Regionalism and Partnership Development

In advance of submitting input to government regarding how best to advance and support *regional collaboration* in this province, the Provincial Council wants to better understand: how groups, agencies, businesses, and government departments currently collaborate; how this experience compares to experiences in other jurisdictions; impediments to effective collaboration; factors underpinning effective collaboration (i.e., best practices); and regional or rural development stakeholder perceptions about appropriate roles for government(s) in terms of advancing and supporting effective collaboration practice. On the basis of this and other available information, the Provincial Council will develop and submit policy advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

#### **Goal:**

By 2011, the Provincial Council will have provided input and advice to the provincial government and worked with community stakeholders to advance regionalism and partnership development in the province.

#### **2009-10 Objective:**

By March 31, 2010, the provincial council will have engaged with government to advance a regionalism and partnership development agenda.

#### **Measure:**

Provincial departments are engaged

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
Position paper developed and submitted to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Council reviewed the report received from an external consultant that outlined regional collaboration experiences and practices in the province, how other jurisdictions approach and support regional collaboration.</li><li>✓ Council received a presentation on the Burin Peninsula Regional Council's work around Regionalism. The session included an overview of the process that the Burin Peninsula Regional Council engaged in, the level of participation, general findings from the sessions, and</li></ul>

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
	<p>next steps that the Regional Council will embark upon. This information was considered in the development of the Regional Collaboration document being drafted by the Provincial Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Council solicited input and feedback from 9 Regional Councils on the external consultants report. 7 of the 9 Regional Councils provided feedback. Based on the feedback received and discussion around the Provincial Council table, the council drafted a Regional Collaboration document.</li> <li>✓ Provincial Council reviewed feedback and input and incorporated aspects of this into the draft regional collaboration document.</li> <li>✓ Provincial Council revised the draft Regional Collaboration document incorporating the input and feedback received from Regional Councils. Due to difficulty in arranging meeting schedules and to get final approval from Provincial Council, the position paper on Regional Collaboration will be finalized, approved and submitted within the first quarter of the 2010-2011 fiscal year.</li> </ul>
Meetings are held with government to discuss potential policy responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Due to time constraints and meeting scheduling, the Provincial Council has not met with government to discuss potential policy responses.</li> <li>✓ Council recognizes that there is no one government department that is responsible for regional collaboration. Therefore, the next step in this process is to submit the position paper to the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat and in consultation with the Minister identify what departments need to become involved with the recommendations put forth in the position paper to advance regional collaboration.</li> </ul>

As a result of its work in 2009-10, council wishes to alter the timing, but not the context or integrity, of its stated work schedule for this strategic issue. The council has revised its Regional Collaboration document incorporating the input and feedback from Regional Councils. Due to meeting schedules and time constraints, the document will be finalized and approved by Provincial Council within the first quarter of 201-11. As well, the document will be submitted to the Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat within the first quarter of 2010-2011.

**2010-11 Objective:**

By March 31, 2011, the Provincial Council will have worked with government and community stakeholders to identify specific regional and local opportunities to advance a regionalism and partnership development agenda

**2010-11 Measure:**

- Regional Collaboration advice document submitted to government
- Conduct community engagement, including government and community, to identify regional and local opportunities with respect to Regional Collaboration.

**2010-11 Indicators:**

- Regional Collaboration advice document submitted to government.
- Engagement sessions with government and community are held.
- Feedback documented
- Identify ways to advance regional collaboration.

**9.2 Issue 2: Focused dialogue with government, in the context of Regional Council work on specific regional and rural policy and developmental priorities**

Provincial council is comprised of representatives of Regional Councils' as well as sector representatives. Through the identification of the importance of Regionalism, Provincial Council has recognized that the voice of regional councils can be strengthened through the work of the Provincial Council.

**Goal:**

By 2011, the Provincial Council, in the context of a regionalism and partnership development agenda as well as Regional Council priorities, will have engaged with the provincial government to advance specific common regional and rural priorities.

**2009-10 Objective:**

By March 31, 2010, the Provincial Council will have commenced engagement with government on specific regional and rural priorities which are informed by its work on regionalism and partnership development.

**Measure:**

Provincial departments are engaged

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
Position papers developed and submitted to government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ The Council continued activity on the two active working groups established in 2008-2009 (regionalism and land use planning) gathering input and feedback from Regional Councils.</li><li>✓ Council revisited the seven broad policy areas that it had identified in 2008-2009. As a result, three working groups that were established in 2008-2009 became active (food security, green issues, and the voluntary and not for profit sector)</li><li>✓ A draft position paper was developed for Food Security</li><li>✓ The Provincial Council engaged Regional Councils in providing input and advice on the draft land use planning document. Due to time and meeting schedules, some Regional Councils did not provide input/feedback until Fall 2009. The information was reviewed and considered by the working group for inclusion into the draft document.</li><li>✓ The Council felt that it needed to become aware and educated on land use planning processes that were happening within the province. The Council received a</li></ul>

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
	<p>presentation from both the North East Avalon Region Plan Review and the Humber Valley Regional Authority which focused on land use planning, the process that each embarked upon, recommendations, and suggested policy implications. This informed the council on initiatives that were being undertaken by other groups in the province around land use planning and identified possible ways for the Provincial Council to engage stakeholders as it further developed and refined its land use planning document.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Council conducted a citizen engagement session with members of the Federation of Agriculture (approx. 120 individuals) as well as community groups and government departments at their Annual General Meeting to solicit input and feedback on the draft food security guiding principles. The information collected will be reviewed by the working group on Food Security and presented back to the Provincial Council with recommendations.</li> <li>✓ The Voluntary and Not for Profit Sector working group is in the preliminary stages of development, identifying the focus of the work for the group.</li> <li>✓ Due to time constraints and meeting schedules, the Council has not finalized the position papers of its five working groups and therefore have not submitted position papers to government on the above.</li> </ul>
Meetings are held with government to discuss potential policy responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Council has attempted to meet with the Internal Land Use Committee of the Provincial Government to discuss the draft concept paper and find out the status of land use planning within the Provincial Government. Unfortunately, due to difficulties in arranging meeting schedules, the Council has not been able to meet with this committee but plans to do so in the 2010-2011 fiscal year</li> </ul>

**2010-11 Objective:**

By March 31, 2011, the Provincial Council will have worked with government and community stakeholders to identify specific regional and local opportunities to advance common regional and rural priorities

**2010-11 Measure:**

- Conduct engagement sessions, including government and community, to identify regional and local opportunities to advance priorities

**2010-11 Indicators:**

- Engagement sessions including government and community are conducted
- Feedback documented
- Identify ways to advance regional and local opportunities to advance priorities.

## 10. Additional Highlights

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The Provincial 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 differing backgrounds with differing priorities and perspectives, differing bases of information and knowledge, and differing 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, two 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 2010-11.

The Provincial Council received a presentation from the Large Ocean Management Area (LOMA) for Placentia Bay-Grand Banks (an initiative of Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada). As a result, two members of the Provincial Council attended a consultation session focused on LOMA to provide input and feedback into the strategy that was being developed.

## 11. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

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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

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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 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

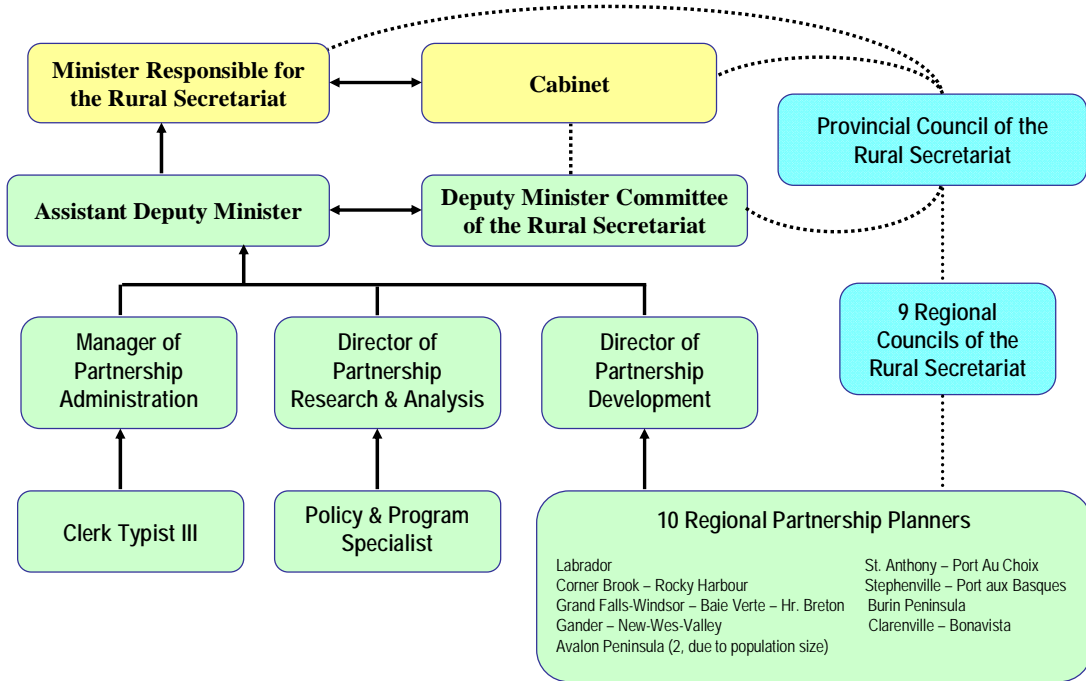
**Outcome Statement:** Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

**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

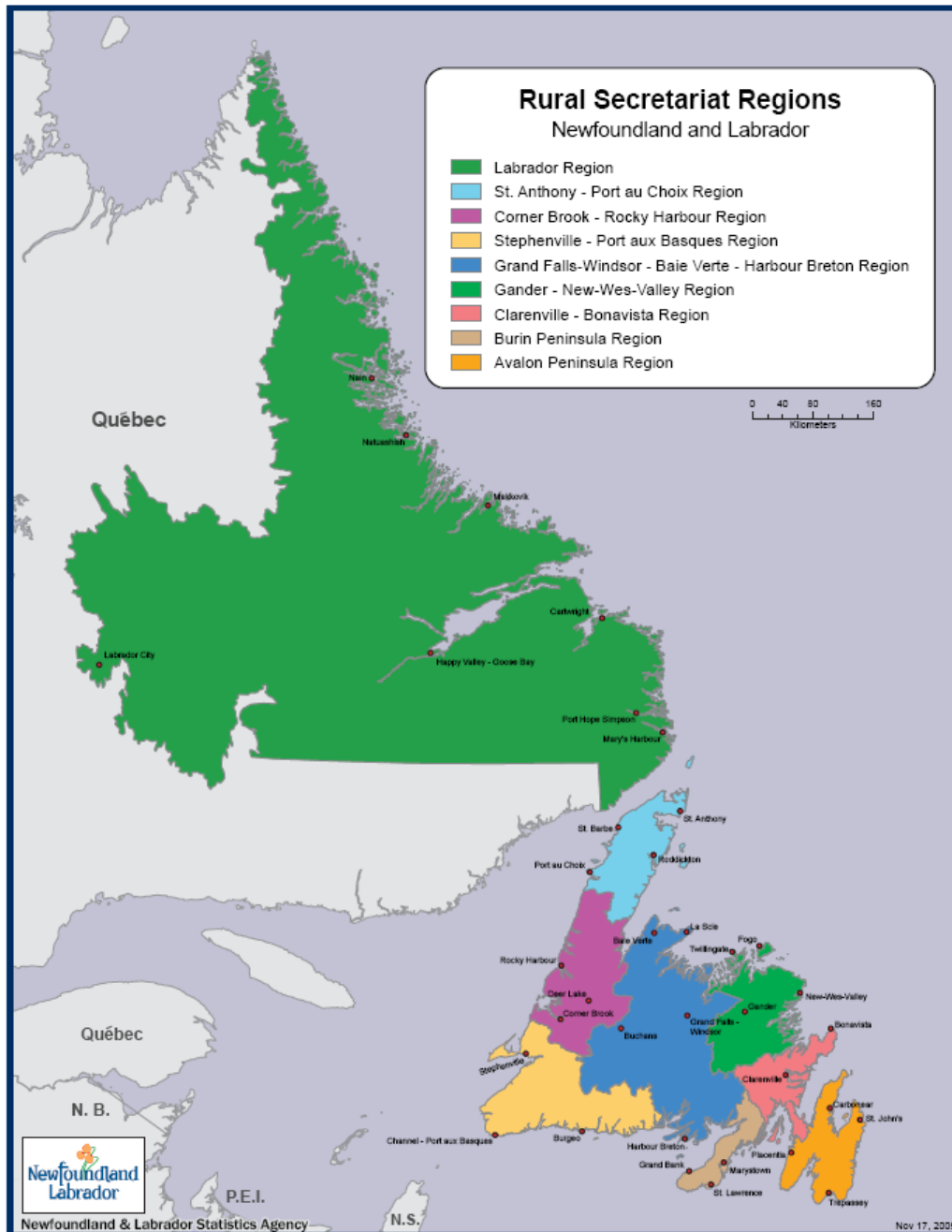
# Appendix B: Organizational Structure

## Rural Secretariat Structure





# Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions



# Appendix D: Mandate of Rural Secretariat and Regional Councils

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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.

## **Mandate of the Regional Councils of the Rural Secretariat**

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 five years.
- Identify policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change.
- 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.
- Nominate an individual to represent the region on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat.

## Photo Credit:



Photo Courtesy of Mary Snow



Photo Courtesy of Greg Wood



Photo Courtesy of Cyril Kerby



## Rural Secretariat