



Avalon Peninsula
Regional Council
of the
Rural Secretariat
Executive Council



*Activity Plan
2008-11*

Message from the Chair

As Chair of the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat and in accordance with government's commitment to accountability, I hereby submit the 2008-2011 Activity Plan of the Council. My signature below is on behalf of the entire Council and is indicative of our accountability for the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of the goals and objectives contained in the plan, pursuant to section 7(4) of the Transparency and Accountability Act.

Since our initial meeting in October 2005, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council has made great strides in both understanding the challenges facing the region and the immense potential of its strengths and assets. This has been achieved through the Council's commitment to an evidence-based approach to regional sustainability.

The Council further understands that in order to achieve sustainability, a more integrated approach is necessary with a strong commitment to partnership development. In many areas this is already happening, while in others there is room for more progress. It is clear that the strength of the relationships among regional partners is a key aspect of long-term sustainability of the Avalon Peninsula.

The Council looks forward to working closely with departments on its key priorities and presenting the provincial government with advice on how sustainability can be achieved.

Sincerely,



Kerry Murray

Chair

Avalon Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

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1.0 Regional Council Overview

The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council is comprised of 13 volunteer members; six female and seven male. Members of the Council have a variety of backgrounds that reflect both the larger and smaller communities in the region and include members with a cross-section of business, labour, social, cultural and environmental perspectives. The members do not represent any particular organization. Council members are asked to bring their collective expertise and experiences to the table to discuss long- term regional sustainability and development.

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

Name	Community
Anne Manuel	Portugal Cove
Betty Moore	Clarke's Beach
Bride Power	Marysvale
Bruce Pearce	St. John's
Des Linehan	Placentia
Don Case	Salmon Cove
Jay McGrath	Branch
John Adams	Harbour Grace
Kerry Murray	Topsail
Maureen Sullivan	Calvert
Patricia Puddester	Bay Bulls
Paul Connors	Conception Bay South
Sheila Lee	Riverhead, St. Mary's Bay

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

The Council does not have a budget allocation. Meetings of the Council and associated costs are funded through the budget of the Rural Secretariat. The Rural Secretariat also funds two staff positions 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 Council is supported by two Regional Partnership Planners, Jamilee Fitzpatrick and Ken Carter. Their regional offices are located in Placentia at the McCormick Building and Carbonear at the College of the North Atlantic Campus, respectively.

2.0 Mandate

The mandate of the Regional Council is as follows:

- 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.

3.0 Values

The core values identified below best describe the character of the Rural Secretariat and the action statements which guide its behaviour. These values are paramount to the mandate and activities of the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council and are as follows:

Core Values
Collaboration
Creativity
Empowerment
Inclusion
Learning Culture
Transparency
Trust

Collaboration	to commit to working together effectively
Creativity	to seek and support new ideas and approaches
Empowerment	to assume responsibility for participating in discussions, making informed decisions and taking personal responsibility for their contributions
Inclusion	to acknowledge others' views and perspectives and exercise the right and opportunity to express their own
Recognition	to recognize and value the skills that each bring
Transparency	to share open and objective advice based on sound information and principles
Trust	to be open and supportive when partnering and to follow through on requests and commitments

4.0 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.

5.0 Vision

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

The work of the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat. Through its work, the Council is identifying priorities which will contribute to regional sustainability. The Council is taking an inclusive approach that considers the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of sustainability.

6.0 Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the Regional Councils. It represents the longer-term goals which the Councils will work towards as they move forward on the strategic directions of the provincial government. The statement also identifies the measure and indicators that will assist both the Councils and the public in monitoring and evaluating the degree to which these goals are attained.

The mission statement of the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat 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.

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

Our mission statement as defined above is intended as a guide for our work for the next three years. However, it is our hope that it will serve as a blueprint for the next 15-20 years so as to attain a vibrant future for the region.

Over the next three fiscal years, the Council will take initial steps to advance regional sustainability. Priorities will be developed and communicated within the region and to appropriate government departments. We will explore ways for regional partners and provincial government departments to work together to advance these priorities. Over time, these priorities may shift as we accomplish our goals and come to a new understanding of the changes that are taking place within the region.

7.0 Issues/Context

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.

In order to make decisions that will contribute to regional sustainability, the Council must have an understanding of the region, its challenges and its opportunities. The Council, as per its mandate, has been developing "a common, evidenced-based understanding of the economic, social, environmental and cultural realities of the region." It has considered information on, among other things, demographics, labour market, and education levels. Each Council member was appointed to the Council based on their varied backgrounds, and each contributes a broad knowledge base to the discussion. The Council has had to reflect on the role of the provincial government and the role of individuals, groups and organizations within the region.

The Council has developed an initial vision document. This document is intended to be a dynamic document. It sets the direction for immediate actions that will impact long-term outcomes. The vision document has set the foundation for the formation of regional priorities for the region.

The regional priorities identified by the Council will be informed by a citizen engagement process. The Council sees citizen engagement as part of their role in fulfilling their mandate. The members of the Council feel that it provides a good opportunity to hear other ideas and thoughts around the data and key themes it has been considering.

7.1 Issue 1: Retention and Recruitment of Youth

The members of the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council see the retention and recruitment of young people to the Avalon region as crucial to long-term sustainability. Council members feel that a comprehensive strategy is needed to address this issue. Government has announced the development of a youth strategy, so the timing of the Council's priority issue will allow it to give timely input to the provincial government.

Goal One: By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will present policy advice on key youth issues providing an informed regional perspective to the provincial government.

Measure: Provide policy advice to the provincial government on regional youth issues.

Indicators:

- Regional research completed
- Consensus developed on findings and recommendations
- Regional perspectives incorporated into the development of a policy advice document
- Increased communication with the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat, the provincial government, community and other stakeholders

Objectives: 1.1 By 2009, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have developed a policy advice document on youth issues.

Measure: Policy Document developed and submitted to the provincial government.

Indicators:

- Regional research compiled
- Engaged with provincial government departments with similar mandates
- Consensus developed by Regional Council on a policy advice document

- Objectives**
- 1.2 By 2010, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have completed community engagement on the policy advice document.
- 1.3 By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have updated the policy advice document.

7.2 Issue 2: Environment

The importance of environmental stewardship has been identified by the Regional Council. They have identified the need for investments to be made where necessary and regions need to reach a level of affordability on environmentally driven initiatives such as waste management and energy efficiency.

Goal Two: By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have reviewed environmental issues, set priorities and provided policy advice to the provincial government.

Measure: Policy advice document submitted.

Indicators:

- Regional research completed
- Current strategies assessed
- Barriers and opportunities identified
- Consensus developed on findings and recommendations
- Regional perspectives incorporated.
- Increased communication with the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat, provincial government departments, community and other stakeholders.

Objectives: 2.1 By 2009, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have gathered information on regional environmental issues and strategies.

Measure: Improved knowledge within the Council of environmental issues and strategies.

Indicators:

- Information gathered
- Engaged with provincial government departments in identifying environmental issues and strategies

Objectives

2.2 By 2010, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have identified key priorities to advance to the provincial government.

2.3 By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have provided policy advice including recommendations related to environmental issues and strategies.

7.3 Issue 3: Infrastructure

The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council has identified infrastructure as a key component to meeting the economic and social needs of the region and to enhance regional sustainability. The Regional Council believes that infrastructure investment has to be strategic and based on regional strengths. As well, they believe that infrastructure investments need to be linked to private sector development, skills development and public services.

Goal Three: By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have reviewed infrastructure issues and set priorities.

Measure: Priorities identified.

Indicators:

- Regional research completed
- Current strategies assessed
- Barriers and opportunities identified
- Consensus developed on findings and recommendations
- Regional perspectives incorporated into the development of infrastructure priorities.
- Increased communication with the Provincial Council, provincial government departments, community and other stakeholders.

Objectives: 3.1 By 2009, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have developed a full understanding of what infrastructure encompasses.

Measure: Clarification of Regional Council's understanding of infrastructure.

Indicators:

- Presentation on the scope of infrastructure.

Objectives: 3.2 By 2010, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have conducted research, including a jurisdictional analysis, and identified key priorities.

3.3 By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have conducted community engagement and validated key priorities.

Appendix A

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.

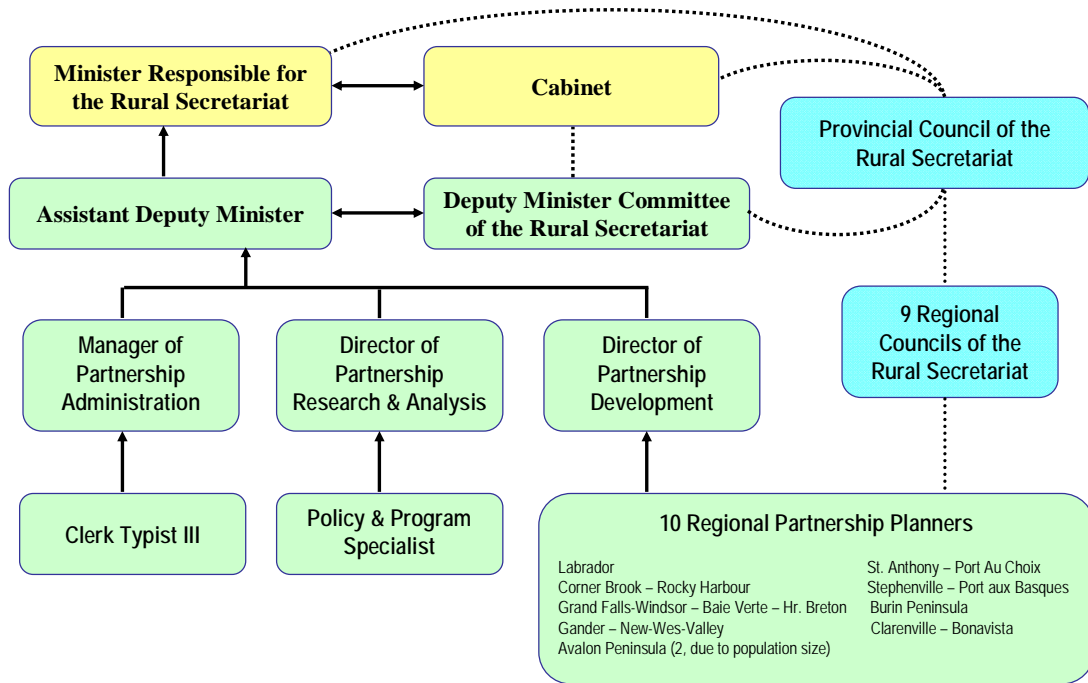
Clarifying Statement: This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Regional Council in the areas of:

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

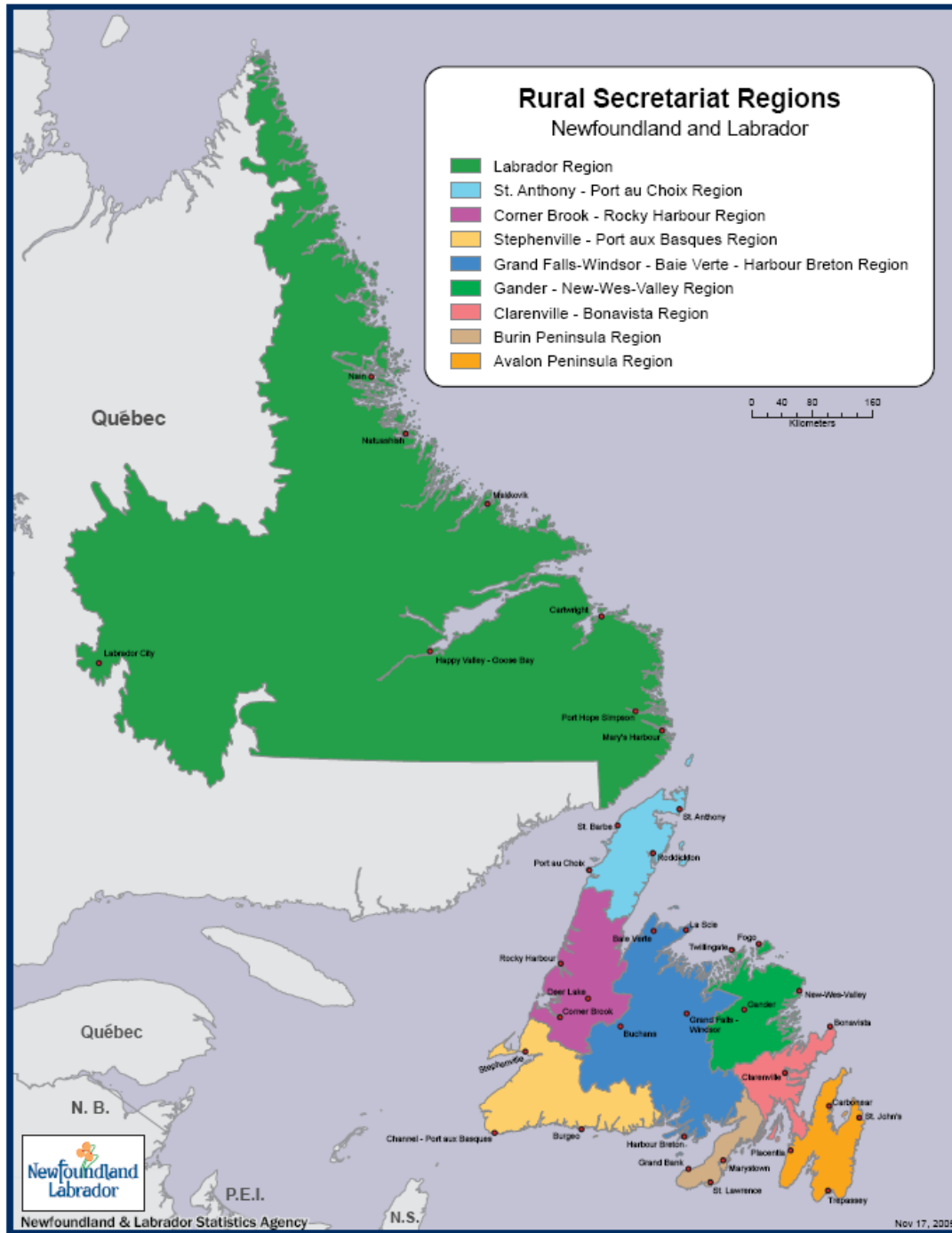
Components of Strategic Direction	Included in activity plan
Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy.	

Appendix B

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C



Appendix D

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.

PHOTO CREDITS:



Signal Hill
Photo Compliments of Paula Whiteway



The Shoreline Walk - Bay Roberts
Photo Compliments of Mary Snow



Canoeing at Juniper Lake
Photo Compliments of Mary Snow



St. Vincent's Beach
Photo Compliments of Irish Loop Dev Board



Cape Broyle
Photo Compliments of Irish Loop Dev Board



Ferryland Lighthouse
Photo Compliments of Irish Loop Dev Board



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