



*Avalon Peninsula
Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat
Executive Council
Activity Report 2009-10*



Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council, I hereby submit the *Annual Activity Report 2009-10*. 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.

During this past year, Avalon Council continued to focus on its three areas of priority as previously determined in 2008-09; youth retention and attraction, environment and infrastructure. The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council, through its research and deliberations, engaged government and community stakeholders in an effort to ensure a participatory approach to refining its focus leading to the development of policy advice.

Throughout our engagement process and deliberations, council maintained the belief that the environment, infrastructure and youth retention and attraction are all dominant factors leading to the enhanced quality of life and the long term sustainability of the Avalon. As a result of the knowledge and awareness acquired in this past fiscal year council is prepared to move forward with its goals and objectives for 2010-11 as outlined within this document.

We look forward to continuing our work in 2010-11.

Sincerely,



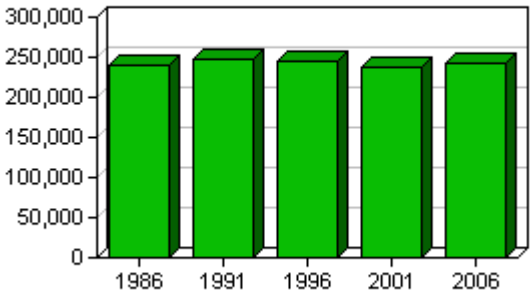
Kerry Murray, Chair
Avalon Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

Table of Contents

1. Overview of the Region.....	3
2. Regional Council Overview	4
3. Mandate	5
4. Lines of Business	6
5. Values	6
6. Primary Clients	7
7. Vision	7
8. Mission	8
9. Report on Performance	8
10. Additional Highlights	13
11. Opportunities and Challenges Ahead	14
Appendix A: Strategic Directions	16
Appendix B: Organizational Structure	17
Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions.....	18
Appendix D: Mandates of Rural Secretariat and Regional Councils.....	19

1. Overview of the Region

Population

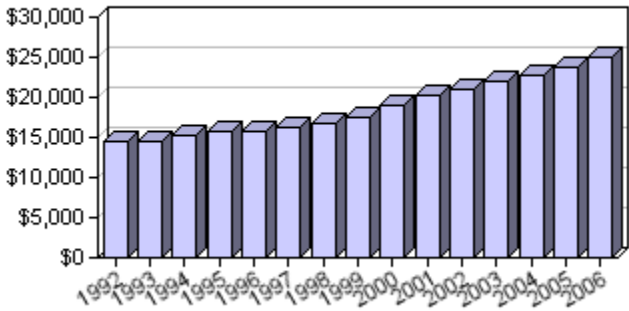


The 2006 Census population for Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was 243,540. This represents an increase of 2.5% since 2001. Over the same period, the entire province experienced a population decline of 1.5% since 2001 (505,470 in 2006, down from 512,930).

The 2006 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was \$25,100. For the province, personal income per capita was \$22,900. After tax personal income per capita, adjusted for inflation, was \$16,100 for Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region in 2006. For the province it was \$14,900.

The 2006 income for every man, woman, and child (personal income per capita) in Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was \$25,100.

Personal Income Per Capita



Half of the couple families in Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region had incomes of more than \$65,200 in 2006. Half of the couple families in the province had incomes of more than \$56,500.

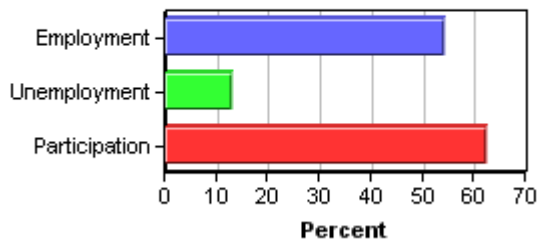
Half of the lone-parent families in Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region had incomes of less than \$26,900 in 2006. Half of the lone-parent families in the province had incomes of less than \$25,300.

The 2006 self-reliance ratio for Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region was 83.1%. 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%.

According to the 2006 Census, in Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region 75.6% 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 12.8%. The provincial unemployment rate was 18.6%.

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



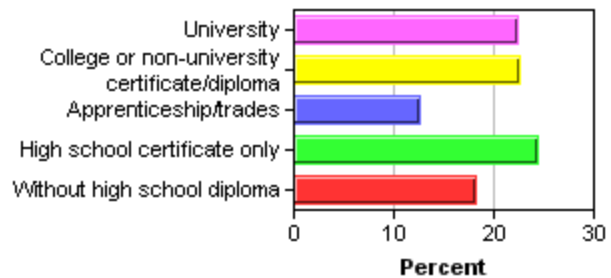
The employment rate for the entire year 2005 for those aged 15 and older was 65.5%. The provincial employment rate for the same period was 63.3%.

The number of individuals in Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region who received Income Support Assistance at some point in the year 2008 was 24,510. The 1991 figure was 36,800.

The total number of children ages 0 to 17 in Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region who were in families on Income Support Assistance in 2008 was 6,660. The figure for 1991 was 13,790.

Census 2006 reported 18.2% of people 18 to 64 years of age in Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region do not have a high school diploma compared to 25.1% of people in the entire province.

Highest Level of Education, Pop 18 to 64



In Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region about 20.6% 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 Avalon Peninsula Rural Secretariat Region, 89.6% of people 25 to 34 years of age had at least a high school diploma. This compares to 85.4% in the entire province and 89.1% for Canada.

A major indicator of well-being is how a person rates their own health status. In 2005, 67.0% of individuals in Avalon Peninsula 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 Avalon Peninsula Regional Council is comprised of 16 members – seven female and nine

male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including ten members from communities of less than 5,000 people. The council met seven 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.

The Rural Secretariat also funds two regional planner positions in the region, who among other duties, act as an information resource for the council and facilitate their. The planners for the Avalon Peninsula region are Jamilee Fitzpatrick and Michelle Yetman. Their regional offices are located in Placentia (Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development) and Carbonear (College of the North Atlantic campus).

Regional Council members	Community
John Adams	Harbour Grace
Sean Bishop	Carbonear
Paul Connors	Mount Pearl
Lorelei Dean	Conception Bay South
Bonnie James	St. John's
Sheila Lee	Riverhead, St. Mary's Bay
Des Linehan	Placentia
Anne Manuel	St. John's
Jay McGrath	Branch
Betty Moore	Clarke's Beach
Kerry Murray	Topsail
Bruce Pearce	St. John's
Bride Power	Marysvale
Maureen Sullivan	Calvert
Brendan White	Northern Bay
Dave Woodman	Harbour Main

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

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.
- 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 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

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 Avalon Peninsula 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 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 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: Retention and Recruitment of Youth

The Avalon Peninsula Regional Council believes that the retention and recruitment of youth to the Avalon region is crucial to long-term sustainability. Council members feel that a comprehensive strategy is needed to address this issue. Provincial Government's announcement of the development of a youth strategy is an important step and allowed the council to give appropriate and timely input.

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

2009-10 Objective: By 2010, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have completed community engagement on the policy advice document.

Measure:

Conducted community engagement on YRAS Strategy document.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
Number of community engagement sessions with stakeholders.	Council conducted engagement session at Memorial University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Participants included 17 youth age 18-29 from a variety of backgrounds (first year students to recent graduates, employed, unemployed and underemployed) ✓ Participants were asked a series of questions drawn from the eight directives outlined in the Youth Retention and Attraction Strategy ✓ Council used discussion and Turning Point Technology to facilitate the session to obtain information on their knowledge and feedback related to the 8 Directives ✓ Additional sessions were cancelled due to low participant response
Feedback documented.	Key highlights that emerged from youth include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ those affiliated with a youth group were more knowledgeable about the Youth Retention and Attraction Strategy than those who were not ✓ younger students were less familiar with the YRAS ✓ of the eight directives outlined in the YRAS “Quality of Life” emerged as the overwhelming number one priority ✓ interest free loan payments were seen as a “drop in the bucket” to those already started the repayment process ✓ youth felt YRAS should focus more on programs and services rather than marketing ✓ concern was expressed by youth that the interest free program does not benefit those who have incurred debt for education such as bank loans ✓ youth suggested that government should offer loan repayment incentive for those willing to live and work in the province

2010-11 Objective: By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have updated the policy advice document.

2010-11 Measure:

- Updated policy advice document provided to government

2010-11 Indicators:

- Advice document updated based on feedback from the community engagement session
- Advice document submitted to government

9.2 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.

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

2009-10 Objective: By 2010, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have identified key priorities to advance to the Provincial Government.

Measure: Identify key environmental priorities for the Avalon Peninsula Region.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
Further research conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Council received a number of presentations during the year focusing on a number of environmental issues. ✓ They received a presentation from the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour on Good Jobs: Green Jobs. This presentation focused on economic development created through the protection and long term sustainability of the environment. Examples of green jobs include those involved in organic agriculture, solar panel installation, energy-efficient green building construction, wind power farms, solar farms as well as other energy efficient related jobs. ✓ Council received a presentation from the Department of Natural Resources on energy efficiency. This presentation focused on the role of the new Energy Efficiency Division; what government is currently doing; and plans for the future. Presentation highlighted Government's commitment to energy efficiency as well as information related to the Energuide for Houses Program and LEED Certification program. ✓ Council received a presentation from Eastern Waste Management which focused on the Provincial Waste Management Strategy and the implementation of the strategy on the Avalon ✓ Council met with the Minister of Environment and Conservation to gather information on Provincial Government's priorities with respect to the environment
Environmental priorities refined.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ After reviewing the information provided during the presentations Council decided that the issues related to the environment are broad based and comprehensive. As

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
	<p>a result of this consideration and after much deliberation related to the Council's ability to effectively address the broad range of issues related to the environment Council decided to refine its focus to one significant issue, waste management.</p> <p>✓ Council made this decision as the waste management strategy is currently being implemented on the Avalon and Council felt it could provide relevant input to government related to waste management for the year 2010-2011.</p>

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

2010-11 Objective: By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have provided policy advice including recommendations related to environmental issues and strategies.

2010-11 Measure:

- Develop policy advice document around waste management

2010-11 Indicators:

- Community based research project conducted and completed with respect to waste management
- Recommendations developed from council
- Policy advice document finalised and submitted to Provincial Government

9.3 Issue 3: Infrastructure

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

2009-10 Objective: By 2010, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have conducted research, including a jurisdictional analysis, and identified key priorities.

Measure: Identified key infrastructure priorities for the Avalon Region.

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
Current strategies reviewed, including transportation and broadband.	<p>Council received presentation from INTRD on the Provincial Broadband Initiative</p> <p>✓ Council were informed that the initiative has a ten year visioning process incorporated</p> <p>✓ Impact on streamlining government programs and</p>

Indicator	Accomplishments 2009-10
	<p>services was highlighted as a key benefit of the Broadband Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Impact on tourism industry was highlighted because of the increased access to broadband <p>Transportation strategies were not reviewed in this fiscal year as this was completed by council in 2009-10</p>
<p>Identify infrastructure available within the region through a jurisdictional analysis.</p>	<p>Reviewed infrastructure available within the Avalon region including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Municipal infrastructure ✓ Fish processing facilities ✓ Marine centre services ✓ Health care facilities (hospitals, health care centres, nursing homes, personal care homes) ✓ Education facilities (secondary, private and public post secondary) ✓ Libraries and CAP sites ✓ Transportation Infrastructure (roads, major tourism routes, airport, ferries) ✓ Federal and Provincial office buildings <p>Points noted after analysis by Council members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provincial Government's criteria for selecting road construction priorities was good ✓ Avalon has a similar number of fish processing facilities as it does education facilities in such sub-regions as Trinity Conception. This emphasizes that the fishing industry has significant economic and social implications within the region for sustainability. ✓ Avalon region as a result of population and urban impact has the majority of provincially focussed infrastructure facilities (such as health care, education, government head offices) which the entire province avails of.
<p>Infrastructure priorities identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Through the information review process, Avalon Council has focussed on transportation (roads) and broadband (Internet and cell phone access)

Based on these accomplishments, council will work toward the following measure and indicators for it 2009-10 Objective.

2010-11 Objective: By 2011, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council will have conducted community engagement and validated key priorities.

2010-11 Measure:

- Conduct community engagement to validate key priorities

2010-11 Indicators:

- Community engagement conducted
- Feedback documented

10. Additional Highlights

In addition to the points raised in Section 9, five additional highlights and accomplishments 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 April 2009, Avalon Council met a number of Members of the House of Assembly (MHA) and/or their designate whose districts are within the Avalon Region. This meeting comprised of an open dialogue session during which time the Council informed MHAs on the work of the Council, an overview of the Rural Secretariat, and invited discussion on ways in which MHAs and the Council could collaborate in bringing forth the citizens perspective on rural sustainability issues.
- ✓ The Regional Council provided input and feedback to the Provincial Council on their Regional Collaboration advice document.
- ✓ In October 2009, the Avalon Peninsula Regional Council met with Minister Shawn Skinner, Minister of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development and Minister Responsible for the Rural Secretariat to discuss the various activities of Avalon Council and to explore opportunities for other Members of the House of Assembly to utilize council as it engages with citizens throughout the Avalon.
- ✓ The Avalon Council was asked to meet with Honorable, Dave Denine, Minister Responsible for the Volunteer and Not for Profit Secretariat to have a discussion regarding the challenges and opportunities facing the volunteer and not for profit sector. This meeting was held in October 2009.
- ✓ 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.

- ✓ Three members of the Avalon Regional Council attended a workshop session on the development of an integrated management plan (IM Plan) for the Placentia Bay/Grand Banks Large Ocean Management Area (PB/GB LOMA). The plan will include a number of environmental as well as social, economic and cultural (SEC) objectives. It's recognized that different sectors and groups are undertaking initiatives regarding different aspects of coastal and ocean related SEC and environmental considerations. The workshop focused on developing a consensus for an overall strategic direction for the number of stakeholders and government departments associated with coastal and ocean activities within and adjacent to the management area.

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 the Provincial 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

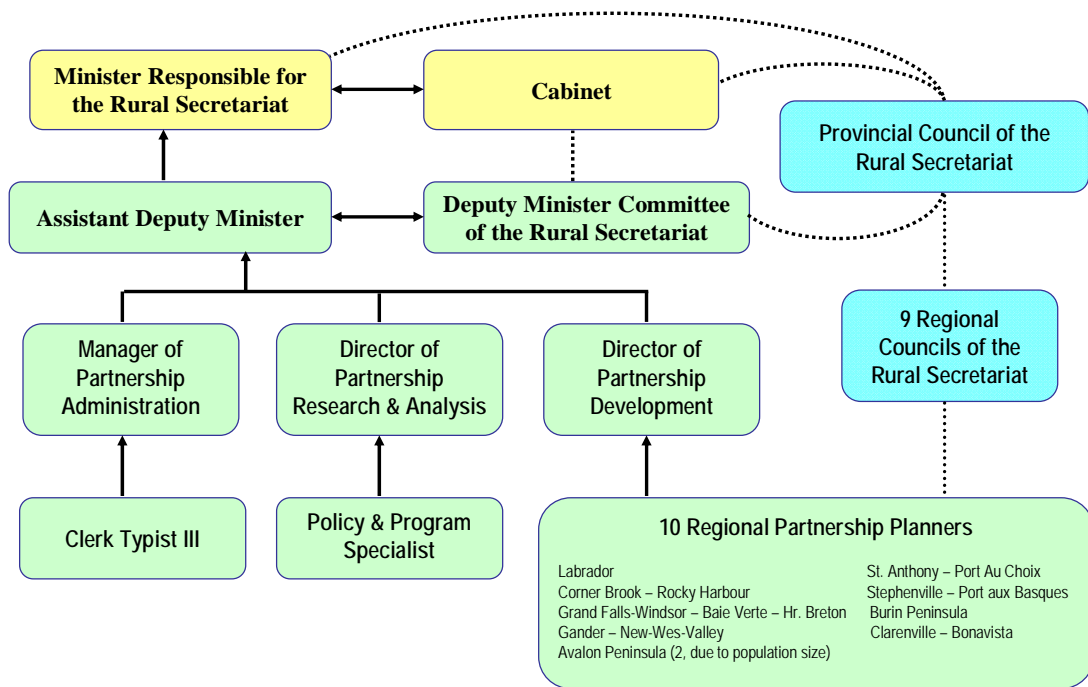
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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

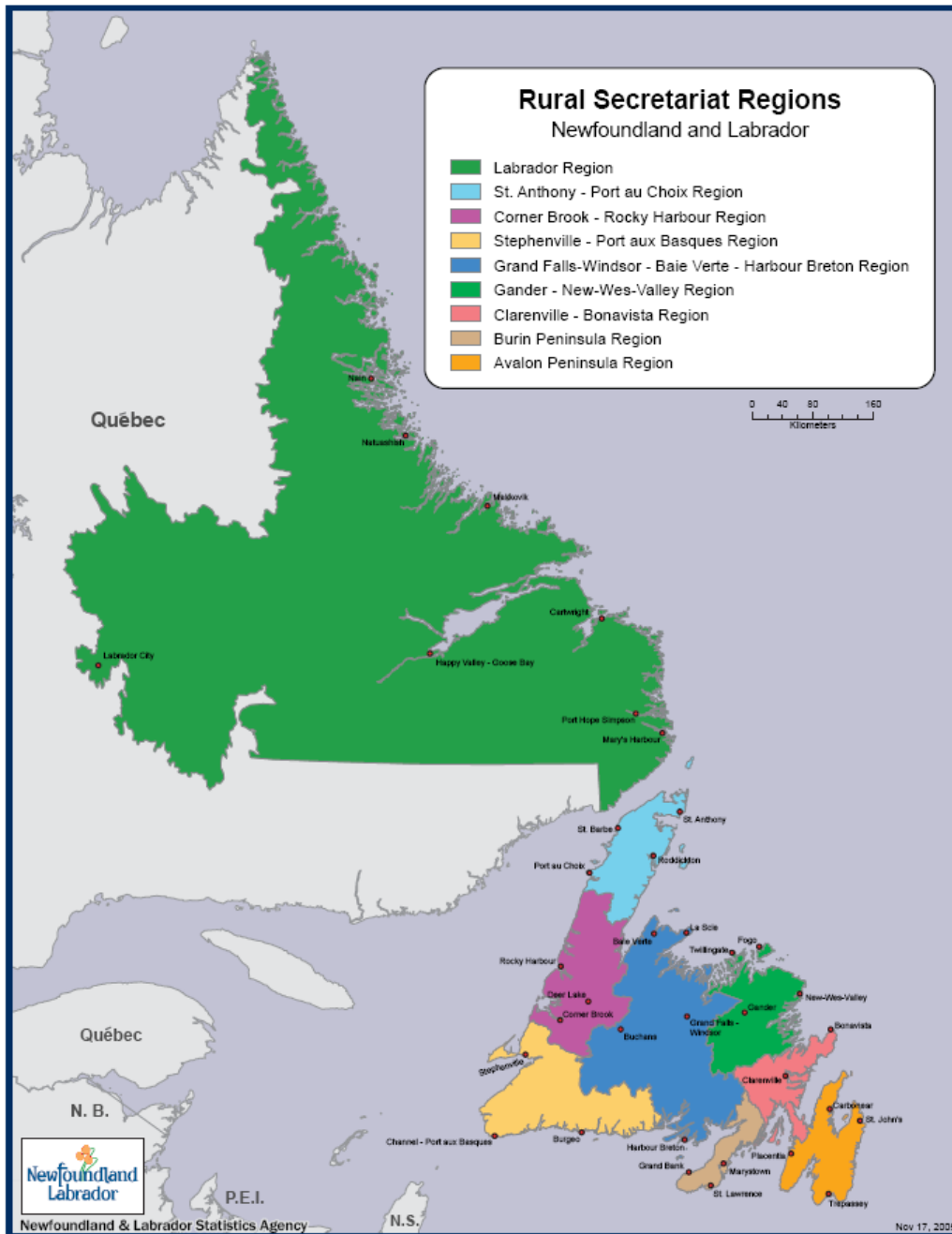
- Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy

Appendix B: Organizational Structure

Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions



Appendix D: Mandates 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.

Photo Credit:



Photo Courtesy of Michelle Yetman



Photo Courtesy of Mary Snow



Photo Courtesy of the City of St. John's



Photo Courtesy of Michelle Yetman



Rural Secretariat

Jamilee Fitzpatrick
Regional Partnership Planner - Avalon Peninsula
1116-1120 Main Street, P.O. Box 61
Dunville, NL A0B 1S0
(w) 227-1322
(c) 227-4426
(f) 227-1602
Email: jamileefitzpatrick@gov.nl.ca

Michelle Yetman
Regional Partnership Planner - Avalon Peninsula
c/o College of the North Atlantic
Room 120, 4 Pike's Lane
Carbonear, NL A1Y 1A7
(w) 596-8923
(c) 680-3388
(f) 596-5187
E-mail: michelleyetman@gov.nl.ca