



# Labrador Regional Council Activity Plan 2011-14



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## Message from the Chairperson

As co-chairs for the Labrador Regional Council, and in accordance with the Provincial Government's commitment to accountability, we are accountable for the preparation and submission of the 2011-14 Activity Plan. The Regional Council is a category III government entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* our signature is indicative of the council's commitment to achieving the objectives of this plan. Careful consideration was also given to the strategic directions of the Provincial Government in the preparation of the Activity Plan for April 1, 2011- March 31, 2014.

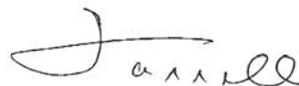
The regional council will continue to work toward achieving the mandate through; developing an understanding of the issues and challenges of the region, engaging with partners and experts to further grow knowledge and build capacity to support informed decision making.

As an advisory body, the Labrador Regional Council will build a common understanding of our region and will be prepared to share our advice, with citizens of the region and with the Provincial Government, with the hope that this advice will influence policy development that will maximize opportunities in Labrador.

The council endeavors to support the Provincial Government through engaging in dialogue to help support the understanding of how program and service delivery may impact the region and the communities therein. To identify and communicate key policies and programs that hinders or supports the region, to government and stakeholders.

As the council works towards the advancement of regional priorities, it realizes that we, citizens and the Provincial Government must all share responsibility for understanding the changes that are taking place and for making the decisions to ensure regional sustainability.

Sincerely,



Lori O'Brien                      and  
Labrador Regional Council Co-chairs

Jim Farrell

## 1. Regional Council Overview

The Labrador Regional Council is comprised of seven members; five female and two male. The council currently has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region, including four members from communities of less than 5,000 people.

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 facilitate the work of the Council. The planner for the Labrador region is Lisa Densmore. Her office is located with Innovation, Trade and Rural Development in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

<b>Regional Council members</b>	<b>Community</b>
Carol Burden	Port Hope Simpson
Cora Edmunds	Postville
Jim Farrell	Wabush
Jonathan Jesseau	Wabush
Lori O'Brien	L'anse Au Loup
Patsy Ralph	Labrador City
Molly Shiwak	Nain

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

## 2. Mandate

The Regional Council's mandate is:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities facing a region.
- To review key economic and social measures (e.g. education levels, demographic trends, health status, income levels, EI usage, economic diversity, etc) and to reach agreement on the priorities for change over the next five years.
- To identify policies and programs which either a) advance b) negatively impact or c) 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 the economic and social measures, and to encourage regional partners to take action on and be accountable for those areas within their mandates.
- To serve as a sounding board in their region for new or proposed initiatives.
- To select an individual to represent the region on the Provincial Council of the Rural Secretariat.

### 3. Lines of Business

The council supports the Rural Secretariat's four lines of business:

**Citizen-based policy advice:** The Rural Secretariat supports nine citizen-based Regional Councils, and one stakeholder-based Provincial Council, to develop policy and decision-making advice for submission to government. Typically, councils, with the support of Rural Secretariat staff, hold public engagement sessions involving citizens and/or stakeholder group representatives, and conduct community-based research activities, to inform the development of advice documents.

**Collaboration:** The Rural Secretariat understands that sustainability in rural Newfoundland and Labrador can be significantly advanced through more and better collaboration between and among rural stakeholders including governments. Sometimes the Rural Secretariat works to support existing rural collaborative processes such as partnerships. Other times they work to help convene new regional collaborative processes such as networks or alliances. The broad goal is to help build a strengthened 'culture of collaboration' in rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Research:** The Rural Secretariat collaborates with provincial partners on a number of formal research endeavors that help to improve understanding of the challenges facing, and opportunities available to, rural regions of this province. The Rural Secretariat also works directly with regional partners and councils on a host of community-based research initiatives – small regional-level data-gathering efforts that give those involved the information and knowledge they need to effectively advise the Provincial Government on regional and rural policy issues.

**Public dialogue and engagement:** In addition to supporting councils to conduct public engagement efforts, the Rural Secretariat is also available to assist other Provincial Government departments to design and deliver their own public engagement initiatives. The Rural Secretariat also periodically convenes special deliberative dialogue initiatives on themes deemed to be of particular importance to the rural sustainability of this province, often in partnership with rural stakeholder groups and other government departments.

### 4. Values

The core values explain the character of the organization. The core values of the Rural Secretariat are as follows:

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Collaboration:</b>         | We are committed to building a culture of collaboration within Newfoundland and Labrador and beyond                                    |
| <b>Creativity/innovation:</b> | We strive to transcend traditional ideas, rules, and patterns, and to work together to create new ideas, relationships, and approaches |

- Inclusion:** We acknowledge difference and cherish the views and perspectives of all. We will take steps to ensure all have an opportunity to express their own views
- Learning culture:** We accept that we have a lot to learn and relish the opportunity to learn more
- Participation/engagement:** We believe citizen/stakeholder/community engagement is essential to the development of good public policy
- Teamwork:** We provide support to one another, work co-operatively, respect differing views and strive to make our work environments safe and enjoyable
- Honesty:** We are open and honest in all our dealings and maintain the highest integrity at all times
- Excellence:** We strive for excellence and quality in everything we do

## 5. Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Labrador 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.

## 6. Vision

The Labrador Regional Council supports the vision of the Rural Secretariat:

**Vibrant rural regions and communities where collaborative organizations and engaged and informed citizens work closely with governments to advance rural sustainability**

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

## 7. Mission

The Labrador Regional Council supports the mission of the Rural Secretariat:

**By March 31, 2017, the Rural Secretariat will have worked with regional and departmental partners to improve the sustainability prospects of rural communities and regions.**

The Labrador Regional Council will support the mission of the Rural Secretariat by collaborating on common issues that impact the whole region and support sustainability. Through dialogue, presentations and experts, council members and stakeholders will learn from each other support partners to develop policy and decision making advice; helping to identify and prioritize issues and topics.

The council will support partners in their use of innovative public engagement, collaboration and/or research methods/approaches to draft preliminary advice documents; identify appropriate recipients for such advice; and following up on advice submitted to ensure timely and appropriate responses.

For more information please refer to the Rural Secretariat's 2011-14 Activity Plan.

## 8. Issues

### **Issue: Provide Advice to Government**

The council has been challenged with thinking long-term and in that process assists government with policy advice and regional input. In their efforts to advise the Provincial Government on regional sustainability the council will be reporting on the same objective, stated below, for the three years identified by the plan.

The Labrador Regional Council has come a long way in its understanding of the region, its challenges and its opportunities. The council has considered the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects of the region and its development and is continuing to learn about each of these aspects. Through research, council will submit advice which will promote sustainable communities and support the provincial government in policy planning that responds to local challenges. Collaborating with other stakeholders through partnerships and information sharing will make sure council is well-informed on regional priorities.

In keeping with the strategic direction of the Rural Secretariat and to ensure that we are well-informed of the issues and challenges this region faces we are utilizing many forms of information gathering, community based research, collaboration and dialogue. Collaboration, as the council defines it, requires a spirit of cooperation and a willingness to make decisions that will maximize benefits for the whole and not just a piece of the whole. There is an opportunity through this process for citizens, stakeholders and interests throughout the region to inform public policy development through an engagement process with Provincial Government decision-makers that is purposeful and deliberate. As regional circumstances change over time, regional priorities will also change. It is important for council, and for other citizens, stakeholders and interests, to remain focused on a long term vision, even in the midst of immediate issues.

The opportunity for the 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 the Provincial Government as well as respond to top-down policy level requests from the Provincial Government that may impact on the region. The council will, through new and strengthened relationships with regional stakeholders, ensure that a broad range of perspectives are considered as it identifies regional priorities, provides advice to government and fosters collaboration.

**Objective:**

By March 31, 2012 council will have provided advice to the Provincial Government on issues that relate to regional sustainability.

**Measure:**

Provided advice

**Indicators:**

- Issue identified
- Researched issue
- Consensus developed on advice to Government
- Communicated advice to Government

Appendix A: Strategic Direction

1. **Title:** Rural Newfoundland and Labrador

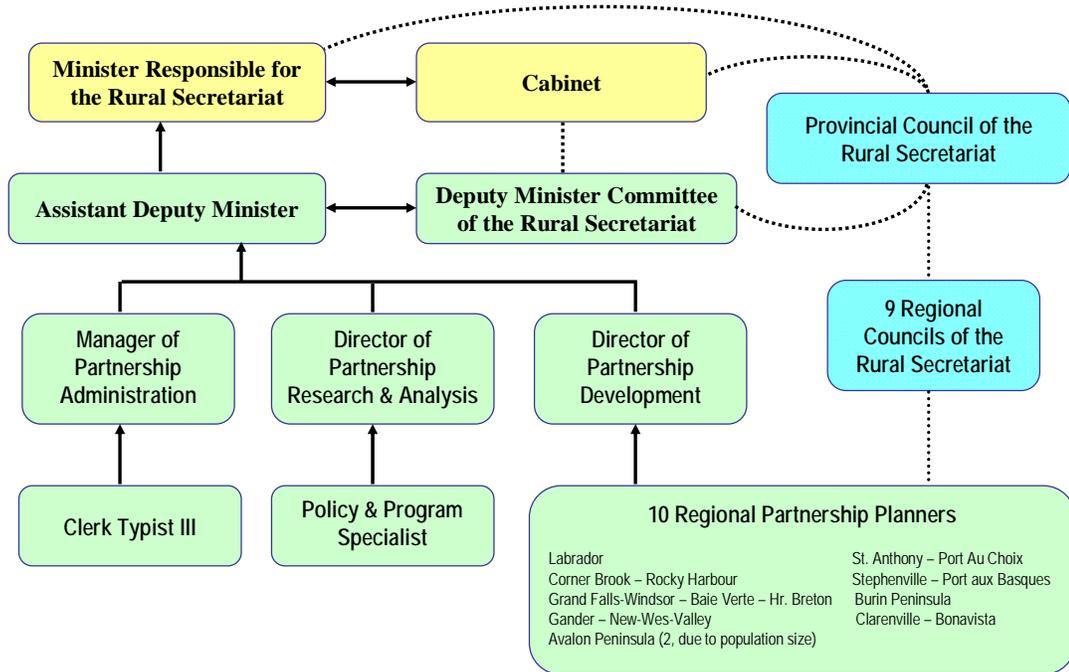
**Outcome Statement:** A sustainable rural Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Clarifying Statement:** This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Rural Secretariat in the areas of:

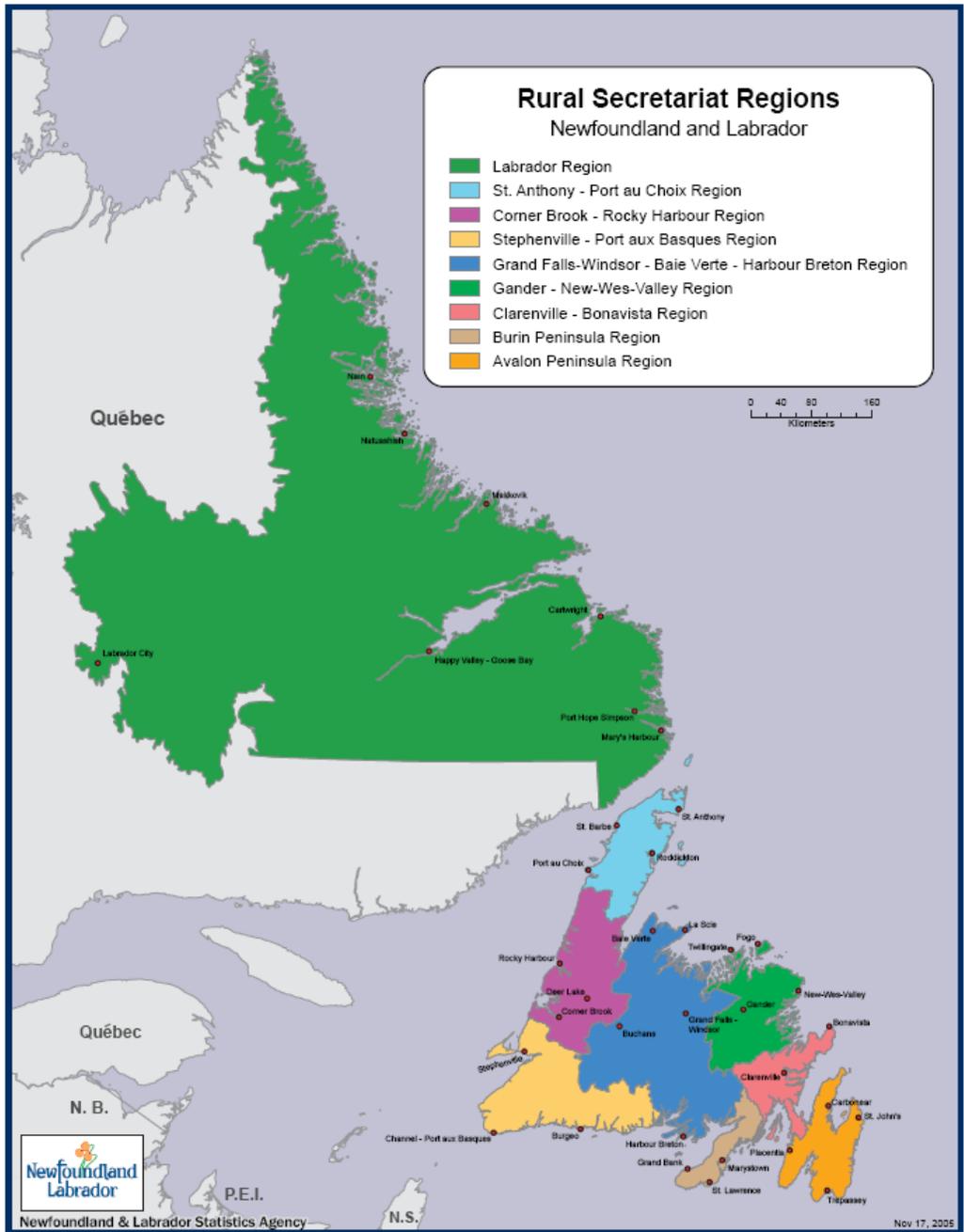
- Citizen-based policy advice
- Public dialogue and engagement
- Collaboration
- Research

Focus Areas/Components of the Strategic Direction	This Direction is:
	addressed in the council's activity plan
1. Citizen-based policy advice	X
2. Public dialogue and engagement	
3. Collaboration	X
4. Research	X

# Rural Secretariat Structure



Appendix C: Map of Rural Secretariat Regions



### **Mandate of the Rural Secretariat**

The Rural Secretariat's mandate is to:

- Promote the well-being of rural Newfoundland and Labrador through a comprehensive and coordinated approach aimed at integrating economic, social, cultural aspects of rural and 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 rural concerns are considered throughout the Provincial Government and promoted at the federal level.
- Carry out research and analysis of economic and social issues affecting rural Newfoundland and Labrador.
- Help communities and regions identify and take advantage of growth opportunities.
- Promote awareness of provincial and federal programs and services regarding rural communities.

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

The Provincial Council mandate is:

- To develop a common, evidence-based understanding of the social, economic, environmental and cultural realities facing Province.
- To review key 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 a) advance, b) negatively impact or c) need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the five year period.
- To advance cooperation through the sharing of information on and discussion about the 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 serve as an external sounding board for government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will effect Provincial and Regional sustainability.

Photo Credits



Courtesy of Lisa Densmore



Courtesy of Lisa Densmore



Courtesy of Lisa Densmore



Courtesy of Lisa Densmore



## Rural Secretariat

### **Lisa Densmore**

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