

Labrador Regional Council of the
Rural Secretariat

Annual Activity Report
2005-06



Happy Valley-Goose Bay

Message from the Chair

The Labrador Regional Council was appointed in August 2005 and held its first meeting in October 2005. The contents of this report outline the council's activities for the remaining five months of the fiscal year.

These first meetings served as an orientation to the council's role and responsibilities. The council received regional specific information that enabled it to better understand the opportunities and challenges within the region. Over the coming months, the council will work towards the identification of regional priorities and will initiate a citizen engagement process to begin to further refine these priorities.

As the council worked together to learn about all areas of Labrador we outlined the assets and strengths of our communities. We discussed how we can build on the strengths we have to help support sustainability. The council identified sustainability as a major factor in the key to our success.

As members of the Regional Council for Labrador we commit ourselves to the process of positioning our communities and its people to fully participate in the region's economic and social development.

This objective shall be achieved by creating a climate for investment; unlocking Labrador's great resource potential through policy direction that impacts on programs that bridge the gap between Labrador of 2006 and Labrador of 2020. -+

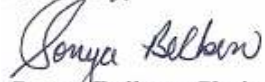
We are aware of the large task ahead of us and commit ourselves to this challenge through a process of meaningful engagement between community and government, resulting in the development of priorities which can influence government policies and the strategic delivery of programs and investment.

Success shall be measured over time a region in which communities and people are the primary benefactors and have the ability, regardless of income, age, gender, spiritual or cultural background or geographic location, to contribute and to fully participate in opportunities throughout the region.

As Chair person for the Labrador Regional Council I hereby submit the annual activity report for the 2005-06 fiscal year. This annual report outlines the results achieved by the Labrador Regional Council and has been prepared under my direction.

I look forward to the work ahead.

Sincerely,



Sonya Belben, Chair

Labrador Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

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Regional Council Overview

The Labrador Regional Council is comprised of 12 members; 7 female and 5 male. Members of the council have a variety of backgrounds that include; economic development, business leaders and youth. The Labrador council is very balanced with perspectives from around the region and members who participate in their communities through volunteerism, community development and their own work responsibilities. They are committed to the process of informing government of the needs and challenges of Labrador and what we can do together to accomplish improvements in our social, economic, environmental and cultural sustainability.

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

Name	Community
Wayne Jenkins	Nain
Isabella Pain	Nain
Jim Farrell	Wabush
Patsy Ralph	Labrador City
Diane Gear	Labrador City
Jonathan Jesseau	Labrador City
Jenni-Rose Campbell	Happy Valley-Goose Bay
Leander Baikie	North West River
Lori O'Brien	L'anse Au Loup
Randy Earle	L'anse Au Loup
Margaret Burden	Port Hope Simpson
Sonya Belben	Forteau

**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 a staff position 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 staff person for the Labrador region is Lisa Densmore. Lisa works out of Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

Overview of the Region

The population of the Labrador Rural Secretariat region is estimated at 27,127 in 2006. This is a decline of about 5.6% from 1999 (compared with a decline of 3.7% for the province overall). The population is expected to stabilize by 2011 (compared to decline of 1.2% for the province overall).

Population decline impacts all age groups and impacts on the size of the labour supply. The age 15-64 group (those of labour force age excluding seniors) is estimated at 19,813 in 2006, a decline of 5.1% from 1999. This age group is expected to fall by almost 1% by 2011. The difference between overall population trends and those of the age 16-64 group can be attributed to continued out-migration from the region.

Within the ages 15-64 age group, 14.6% are ages 55 to 64. This means, in broad terms, that about 15 in every 100 individuals will exit the labour force over the next decade.

This movement out of the labour

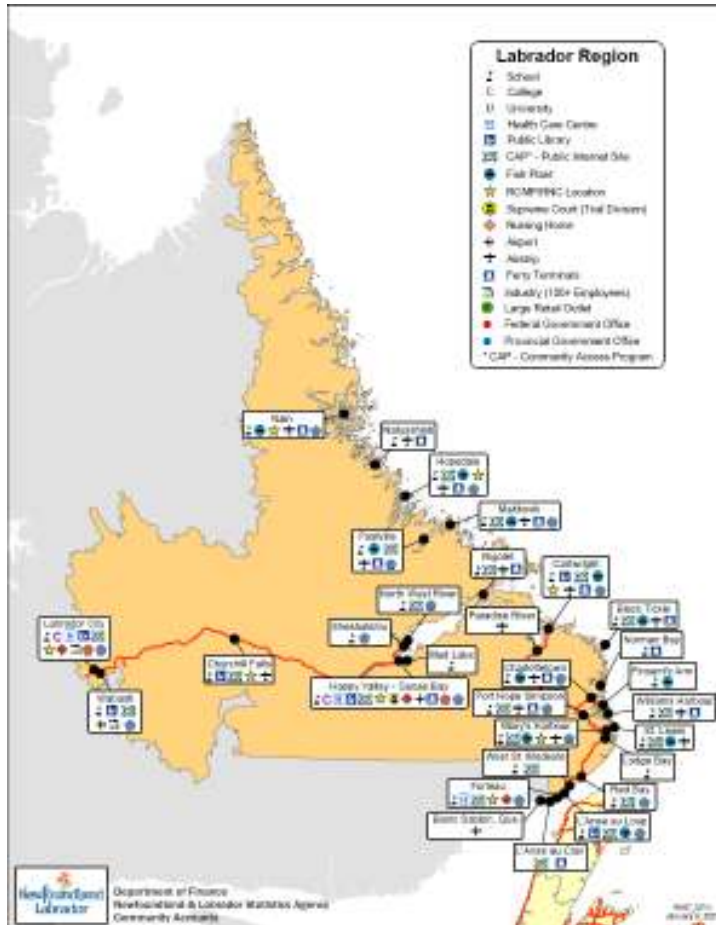
force will create “replacement” demand for labour in the region for younger workers. While not all retiring workers will likely be replaced (i.e., firms will substitute investment in machinery and equipment for labour) there will be opportunities for youth in the region in the future, probably at higher wages rates as the labour market tightens.

While the population has declined, the labour market, measured in terms of the number of people with earned income, grew between 1999 and 2004 from 15,880 to 16,160 individuals. After adjusting for inflation, the average earned income per worker employed grew by 4.6% over this period compared to provincial real growth of 9.0%. Growth in real earned income also allowed for relatively strong growth in real personal income per capita over this period (13.0% versus 15.2% for the province overall). This trend means that personal income per capita in the region, while higher than the provincial average, is converging back toward the

Indicator	Labrador	Percent of Province
Total Population		
1999	28,748	5.4%
2006	27,127	5.3%
2011	27,213	5.4%
Population Ages 15-64		
1999	20,883	5.6%
2006	19,813	5.4%
2011	19,656	5.5%
Population Ages 55-64 2006	2,887	4.2%
Number of People Employed		
1999	15,880	6.1%
2004	16,160	6.0%
Earned Income per Worker Employed		
1999 (\$2004)	\$30,600	125.9%
2004	\$32,000	120.8%
Personal Income per capita		
1999 (\$2004)	\$20,800	116.2%
2004	\$23,500	114.1%
Employment by Occupation		
Fishery (harvesting + processing)	1,080	4.6%
Primary activity (excl fish harvesting)	765	8.8%
Manufacturing (excl. fish processing)	630	6.9%
Construction	3,430	8.2%
Services sector (incl. public admin)	7,125	5.9%
Health and education services	1,060	4.1%
EI beneficiaries		
1999	5,315	5.2%
2005	4,960	4.9%
Educational Attainment Ages 18-64		
University Degree	1,405	3.7%
Post secondary/Trades certificate	7,470	6.9%
High school/some post secondary	4,170	5.4%
Not completed high school	5,645	5.0%

Source: Calculated from Community Accounts website and Economic Research and Analysis, Department of Finance (www.communityaccounts.ca, www.economics.gov.nl.ca)

Summary Infrastructure Map for the Labrador Region



provincial average. In 2004, the ratio was 114.1% down from 116.2% in 1999.

In other words, the population of Labrador is stabilizing, the labour market is growing, and workers are experiencing real earned income growth.

On an occupational basis, the fishery (harvesting and processing) employed 1,080 in 2000, or about 7.7% of employment, in Labrador compared to 10% for the province overall. This meant that 4.6% of total fisheries related employment in the province, but 5.3% of the population, accrued to Labrador.

The overall occupational structure in the region is weighted toward goods producing seasonal industries. In 2000, the fishery, other primary activity and construction accounted for 37.4% of employment in the region, and 35.0% of EI

beneficiaries in 2005. Overall, there were 4,960 EI beneficiaries in the region in 2005, or about three EI claims for every ten people with earned income. The region accounted for 4.9% of total provincial EI beneficiaries in 2004 but 5.3% of the population.

The educational profile of workers in the region is generally aligned with the occupational structure. Just over 1,400 individuals between ages 18-64 (7.5%) had a university degree in 2000 compared with almost 7,500 individuals with a trades or college level certificate (40.0%). Overall, therefore, 47.5% of individuals ages 18-64 in Labrador had completed post secondary studies. (This compares favourably to 43.6% for the province overall.)

At the same time, 30.2% of this age group in the region have not graduated from high school. While many of these workers have acquired on-the-job skills, their earnings growth potential, and their ability to upgrade and transfer their existing skill sets, may be limited. There are some age specific differences of importance for this education level. For example, considering older workers only (those ages 55-64), 55.0% have not completed high school. Conversely, considering younger workers only (those ages 25-29), 17.3% fall in this category.

1. Occupational and educational attainment data is sourced from the 2001 Census. Data from the 2006 Census will not be available until 2008.

Mandate

The mandate of the Regional Councils 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.

Highlights and Accomplishments

The council was appointed in August 2005. During the remaining seven months of the fiscal year, the council met three times.

The first meeting of the council was held during the Dialogue Day of the Rural Secretariat Marble Mountain, Steady Brook. This meeting served as an introduction to the role and responsibilities of the council. Information presented to the council included data on demographics, education and labour market participation. This meeting also provided an opportunity for the council to meet directly with Cabinet.

Two more meetings were held in Labrador City and Happy Valley-Goose Bay by the end of the fiscal year. Up to this time the council was presented with information on economic, demographic and social challenges and opportunities within the region, and began a discussion about the challenges and opportunities within the region.

Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

Facing the Challenge

We are faced with many challenges as we move forward in planning for our region. We are a large region with different strengths in different parts of Labrador. Not all communities can or will be connected by road so there are access to service challenges, labour market challenges and regional differences which have to be considered when visioning for Labrador. We live on a land mass of 295,000 square kilometers and have roughly 27,000 people and five distinct areas. This means the roads we do have connecting Central Labrador to Western Labrador are not within commuting distance. We rely heavily on air and marine transportation which increases the cost of doing business, receiving services and sharing resources is sometimes impossible.

Sustainability

Sustainability is a major factor in the key to our success. The Regional Council for Labrador defines sustainability as a critical relationship between the environment and people. Our definition of sustainability is thought of throughout the vision and encompasses the following:

- stabilized population
- improved technology
- energy efficient
- diverse economy
- flexible programs and services
- mindset of cooperation and partnership
- meeting the demands of education and health

Collaboration

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. This kind of collaboration provides opportunities and benefits that would not otherwise be possible. It also poses a challenge for individuals to step out of their 'comfort zones' and look at issues differently.

Long-term thinking

Long-term thinking will continue to be both an opportunity and a challenge. Thinking long-term, in the context of the work of the council, provides an opportunity to set a shared goal for the region and to, collectively, define the steps required to achieve the goal. Thinking long-term will also be challenging for individuals and groups when there are immediate issues surfacing within regions.

Citizen Engagement

There is an opportunity through this process for citizens to directly influence public policy development. This citizen engagement process is a purposeful, deliberate process to engage citizens in a two-way conversation with government decision-makers. This process is not limited to the citizens that sit on the councils of the Rural Secretariat, rather there is a process for the broader citizenship to engage in a discussion about the future policy directions of government. The challenge will be to truly open our minds, listen to each other and discuss issues in a respectful manner.

Vision Development

The vision document that is being developed by the council is not intended to achieve a final form, but rather the intention is for it to continue to be a working document. The vision document will identify what we want to see 15 to 20 years out. Today that time frame is 2022-2027. In five years time, that time frame will be 2027-2032. As priorities are accomplished new priorities will be identified. This will provide an opportunity for us to be informed about what is moving and changing in our regions, where the next opportunity will be and where the next challenge will be. It will also provide a challenge for all involved to have faith in the process and realize that it will take time until these priorities are accomplished. It takes time to make significant change and it is important for this council to remain focused on the future, even in the midst of immediate challenges.

Appendices

Strategic Directions

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.

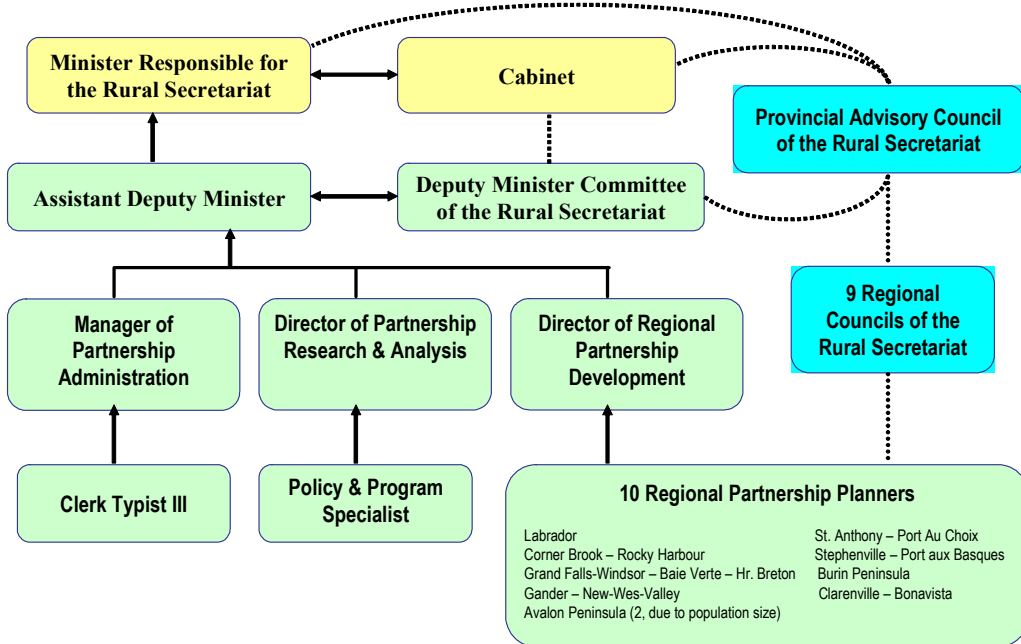
2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability

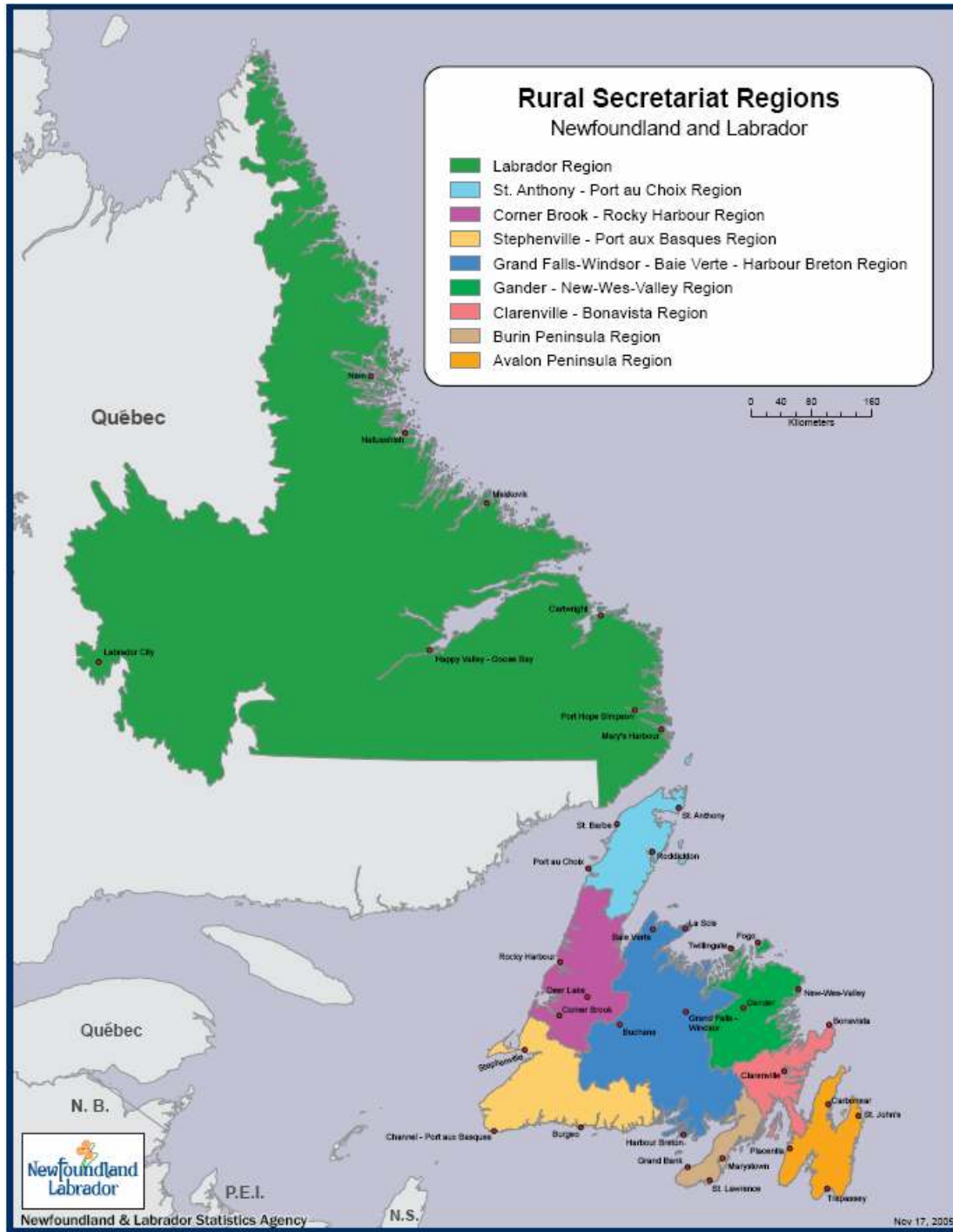
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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.

Rural Secretariat Structure





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.
- Identify and advise government on policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary change over the five year period.
- 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.
- Meet twice annually with the provincial Cabinet and deputy ministers to advance regional development priorities.
- Serve as an external sounding board for government for the development of strategies, policies, programs and budget issues that will affect provincial and regional sustainability.



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