



Stephenville –
Port aux Basques
Regional Council
of the
Rural Secretariat
Executive Council



Activity Plan
2008-2011

Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council, I hereby submit the 2008-11 activity plan. 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.

The Stephenville – Port aux Basques region will look differently in the future and we need to begin to plan today for future generations. Regional Council members are focused on the long term sustainability of the region. Council believes that sustainability is achieved when an area's population continues to be able to live, work and raise families in the area over the long-term while having access to an array of retail, social and recreational amenities as well as high quality public programs, services and infrastructure.

At the heart of sustainability is sustainable development. While there are many definitions of sustainability, the Regional Council believes that it is the simple idea of ensuring a good quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It is about ensuring that how we live, work and enjoy leisure activities does not harm or put undue pressures on the environment. It is about ensuring everyone has the opportunity to high quality education, a quality environment that they take pride in, good health and meaningful employment.

The Council looks forward to advancing dialogue and input on issues pertaining to regional sustainability.

Sincerely,



Robin Davis
Chair, Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council

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1.0 Regional Council Overview

The Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council is comprised of nine members; five female and four male.

The Council members have a variety of backgrounds and experiences that cut across an array of sectors that include the fishery, health care, social economy, private sector and education.

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

Name	Community
Eric Legge	Cartyville
Kelly Tompkins	St. Andrews
Audrey Gracie	Kippens
Margaret Gaudon	Port au Port West
Ruth Forsey-Gale	Robinsons
Calvin White	Flat Bay
Michelle Skinner	St. Georges
Susan Fowlow	Stephenville
Robin Davis, Chairperson	Stephenville Crossing

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

Regional Council members are committed to meeting four times per year. Their work is focused by three questions:

1. What will your region look like in 15 years?
2. What do you want it to look like (a vision)?
3. What policy and program framework will be required to bridge the gap?

To date, Council members have been engaged with discussions around question number one and to a lesser degree question number two by looking at the demographic, social and economic challenges as well as opportunities within the region. This Plan will advance discussions on the third question.

It is through utilization of research and evidence that the Regional Council will promote discussions on the long-term future of the region. There are many different groups and provincial government departments and organizations that are looking at the short-term

2.0 Mandate

The Mandate of the Regional Councils 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 explain the character of the organization we promote and the action statements guide behaviour. The core values of the Rural Secretariat which also guide the behaviour of the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council are as follows:

Core Values
Collaboration
Creativity
Empowerment
Inclusion
Learning Culture
Transparency
Trust

Collaboration Each person is committed to working together effectively.

Creativity	Each person seeks and supports new ideas and approaches.
Empowerment	Each person is responsible for participating in discussions, making informed decisions and taking personal responsibility for their contributions.
Inclusion	Each person acknowledges others' views and perspectives and has the right/opportunity to express their own.
Learning Culture	Each individual is recognized and valued for the skills that they bring and is encouraged to continue to learn.
Transparency	Each individual gives and shares open and objective advice based on sound information and principles.
Trust	Each person is open and supportive when participating in partnerships and follows through on requests and commitments.

4.0 Primary Clients

The primary partners for the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council include the provincial Rural Secretariat, its Provincial Council and departments and agencies within the provincial government.

At the regional level, the primary partners for the Regional Council include all citizens within the region whether individuals, or members of groups or organizations.

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 Stephenville – Port aux Basques 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 measures 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 Stephenville – Port aux Basques 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 provincial government departments. We will explore ways for regional partners and 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 Goals & Objectives

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.

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY

As a means to achieving sustainability, Regional Council members have decided to look at the various economic sectors as a starting point. The first sector Council members wish to investigate is agriculture and agrifoods. This choice is based on the fact that the region has a long history in agriculture, and has some of the most fertile soils and produces more root crop than any other area of the province. In addition to building an evidence base around the industry potential, presentations were made to Council members by representatives of the local Regional Economic Development Boards and the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. In all presentations, the agriculture and agrifoods sector was identified as a priority area having some of the greatest potential for growth and expansion in the region.

Goal:

By March 31, 2011, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have developed an informed regional perspective outlining the opportunities and barriers to expand agriculture and agrifoods production in the region.

Measure: Regional perspective developed

Indicators:

- Document outlining regional opportunities and barriers is developed
- Discussions between the Regional Council and the Provincial Council and appropriate provincial government departments are held
- Regional Council policy and program advice is presented to the provincial government

Objectives:

1. By March 31, 2009, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have defined and validated opportunities and barriers associated with agrifoods expansion and production in the region

Measure: Agrifoods opportunities and barriers defined and validated

Indicators:

- Research completed – presentations and literature review
 - Major issues within the industry sector identified and documented
 - Definition and validation has occurred through community engagement and other information collection processes
 - Relationships begin to develop whereby all relevant partners (industry and government departments) are sharing information
2. By March 31, 2010, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have communicated identified opportunities and issues within the agriculture and agrifoods sector.
 3. By March 31, 2011, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have engaged with government, community stakeholders and industry to advance specific policy, program and business opportunities identified in the agriculture and agrifoods sector.

7.2 TRANSPORTATION

A fundamental requirement for sustainability for any region is having the ability to move people, goods and services. The Stephenville – Port aux Basques region currently has significant existing transportation infrastructure ranging from a roads network to airport and marine infrastructure. However, there is a need to ensure that infrastructure is well developed and maintained, including further enhancements that may be required to ensure the region can be responsive to potential development. It also important to be cognizant that transportation infrastructure cuts across other sectors and impacts accessibility issues.

Goal:

By March 31, 2011, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have developed an informed regional perspective on transportation infrastructure in relation to regional sustainability.

Measure: Position paper developed.

Indicators:

- Regional research conducted
- Needs and issues assessment completed
- Document which outlines key actions required to maintain and/or improve transportation infrastructure
- Opportunities to validate research through community engagement with industry and community partners
- Advice communicated to the provincial government

Objectives:

1. By March 31, 2009, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have explored transportation infrastructure priorities for the region

Measure: Priorities identified

Indicators:

- Council dialogue to reach consensus on priority issues
 - Community engagement activities completed to gather input and information
 - Other sources of information explored
2. By March 31, 2010, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have identified opportunities for action related to the maintenance or improvement of transportation infrastructure.
 3. By March 31, 2011, the Stephenville-Port aux Basques Regional Council will have engaged with the provincial government to identify specific opportunities for action related to the maintenance or improvement of transportation infrastructure.

7.3 COMMUNICATION / PRIORITY PROCESS

“The Rural Secretariat focuses on the sustainable development of all regions of the province. It promotes information sharing, informed dialogue and collaboration within the provincial government and between government and communities. It facilitates horizontal thinking on regional issues and is focused on the long-term sustainability of all regions of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Secretariat conducts research, develops processes and tools, and engages citizens to enhance the consideration of regional issues in public policy development.” [2006-07 Annual Activity Report]

Regional Councils have the mandate to identify policies and programs which either advance, negatively impact or need to be developed to encourage the necessary changes required for regional sustainability. As a result, Regional Council members feel it is of critical importance that both the provincial government and citizens understand the process of how the Regional Council identifies, prioritizes and investigates regional issues.

Goal:

By March 31, 2011, the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Region Council will have established a process for identifying, prioritizing and investigating regional issues, including identifying mechanisms for improved communication with the provincial government and citizens.

Objectives:

1. By March 31, 2009, the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council will have developed a structured process to develop regional priorities.

Measure: Priority setting process developed

Indicators:

- Related research completed
 - Engagement with others has taken place
 - Priority area identified, validated and revised if necessary
 - Discussions and meetings with appropriate government departments
 - Consensus reached and position paper developed and put forward
2. By March 31, 2010, the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council will have evaluated the process to determine its effectiveness and whether or not changes need to be made or if an alternate process needs to be developed.
 3. By March 31, 2011, the Stephenville – Port aux Basques Regional Council will have identified additional priority issues and opportunities with the intent of developing a regional perspective for submission to the provincial government.

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.

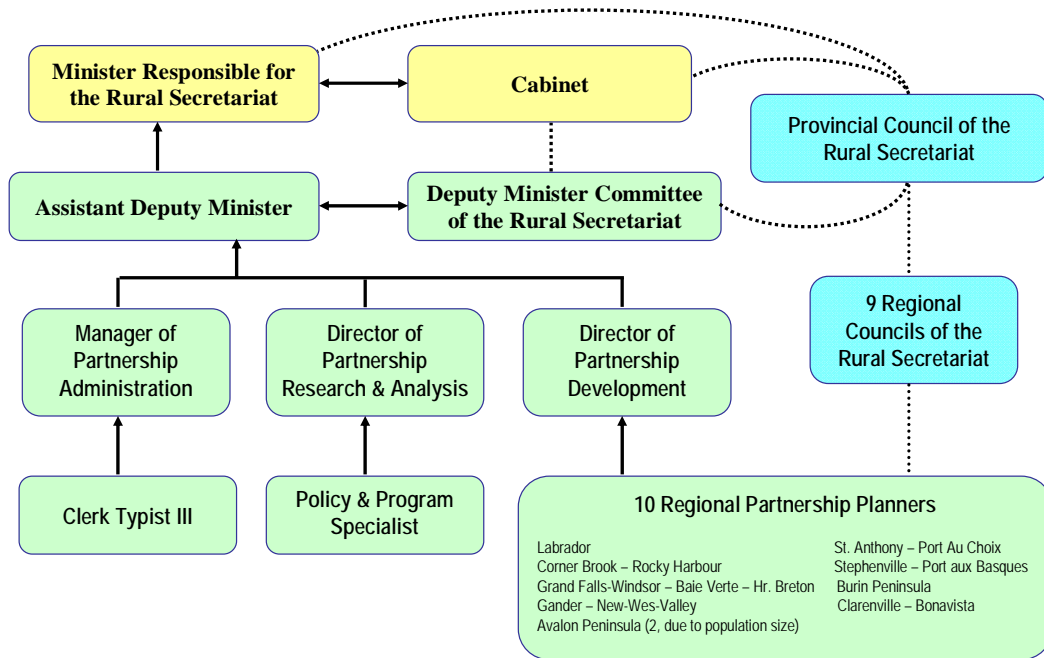
Clarifying Statement: This outcome requires systemic intervention by the Regional Council in the areas of:

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

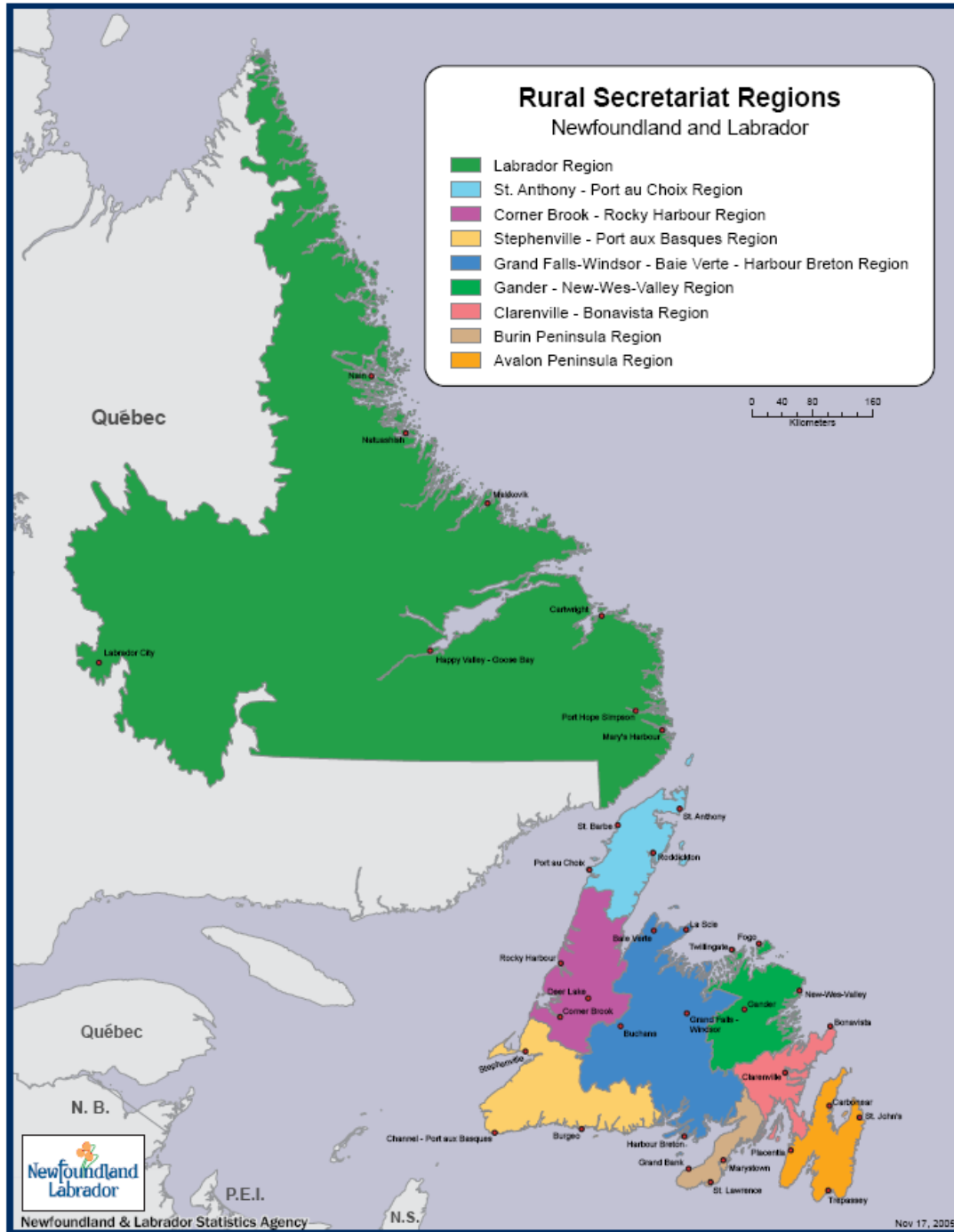
Components of Strategic Direction	Included in activity plan
Regional perspectives which can inform the development and implementation of public policy.	

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



Boutte du Cap (The Boot) at Cape St. George
Photo Compliments of Sam Organ



Stephenville
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Ramea ferry – Gallipoli
Photo compliments of Sam Organ



Codroy Valley
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Rural Secretariat

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