

Burin Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

Annual Activity Report 2005-06



Petit Forte

Message from the Chair

As Chairperson for Burin Peninsula Regional Council I hereby submit the annual activity report for the 2005-06 fiscal year. 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 and any variances explained herein.

The Burin Peninsula 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 a council we are committed to this process and to working with all stakeholders in our region to ensure that we create an environment for prosperity and sustainability on the Burin Peninsula and in the Province.

I look forward to the work ahead.

Sincerely,



Dr. Michael Graham
Chair

Burin Peninsula Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

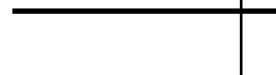


Table of Contents

<i>Regional Council Overview</i>	1
<i>Overview of the Region</i>	2
<i>Mandate</i>	2
<i>Highlights and Accomplishments</i>	3
<i>Opportunities and Challenges Ahead</i>	3
<i>Appendix A: Strategic Directions</i>	6
<i>Appendix B: Organizational Structure</i>	7
<i>Appendix C: Map of the Rural Secretariat Regions</i>	8
<i>Appendix D: Mandates of the Rural Secretariat and Provincial Council</i>	9

Regional Council Overview

The Burin Peninsula Regional Council is comprised of 12 members; 4 female and 8 male. Members of the council have a variety of backgrounds that include municipal government, small business, education (secondary and post-secondary), economic development, tourism, culture, youth issues, labour market issues, and our social environment.

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

Name	Community
Dr. Michael Graham	Burin
Trina Appleby	Burin
Gordon Piercey	Lewin's Cove
Charles Wiscombe	Marystown
Jeff Pittman	Marystown
Mary McCarthy	Marystown
Irene Hurley	Spanish Room
Brian Rose	Fortune
Corey Parsons	St. John's (Originally from Fortune)
Trevor Bungay	Grand Bank
Harold Murphy	Parker's Cove
Pamela Pardy-Ghent	Harbour Mille

**For an updated listing of council members please visit <http://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/rural/regionalcouncil.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 Burin Peninsula region is Greg Dominaux. Greg works out of an office in the College of the North Atlantic – Burin Campus.

Overview of the Region

The Burin Peninsula Rural Secretariat region covers the area south of, but not including, Swift Current encompassing the entire Peninsula.

Comprised of 40 communities the Burin Peninsula region was reported as having a population of 23,710 in 2001. Of these 40 communities there is only one community that is not located on the coast and approximately 60% of the people live in communities that have a population of 1,000 or more. The only town with a population over 5,000 is Marystown, which is the main service centre for the region.

The Burin Peninsula, referred to as “The Boot” by many, is a region steeped in rich history, culture and tradition. Not unlike other areas in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Burin Peninsula has relied upon the exploitation of its natural resources to drive its economy. The fishery continues to play a major role in the region’s economy but other sectors such as marine fabrication, small based manufacturing and tourism are also prominent. The Burin Peninsula is also home to Mortier Bay one of the deepest, ice free most sheltered ports in the world, the Provincial Seaman’s Museum and is the gateway to the French islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon.

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 four times including the initial meeting at the Dialog Day in October 2005.

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.

Three more meetings were held in November, February and March. 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.

The council is to be commended for their commitment and enthusiasm towards this process. Council members have already begun to think regionally and become a very cohesive group.

Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

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.

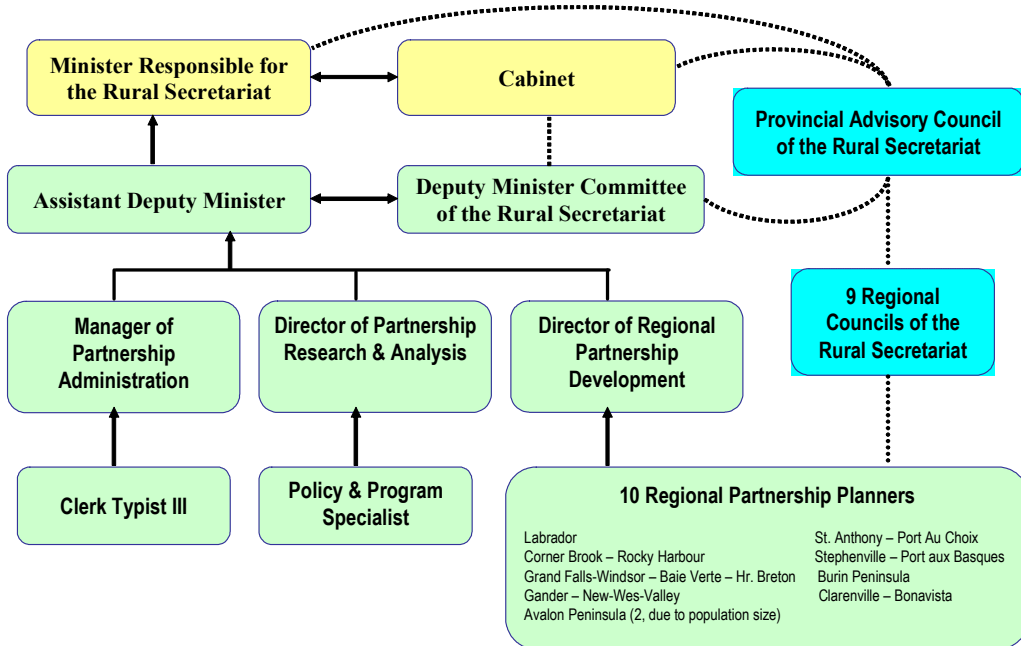
2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability

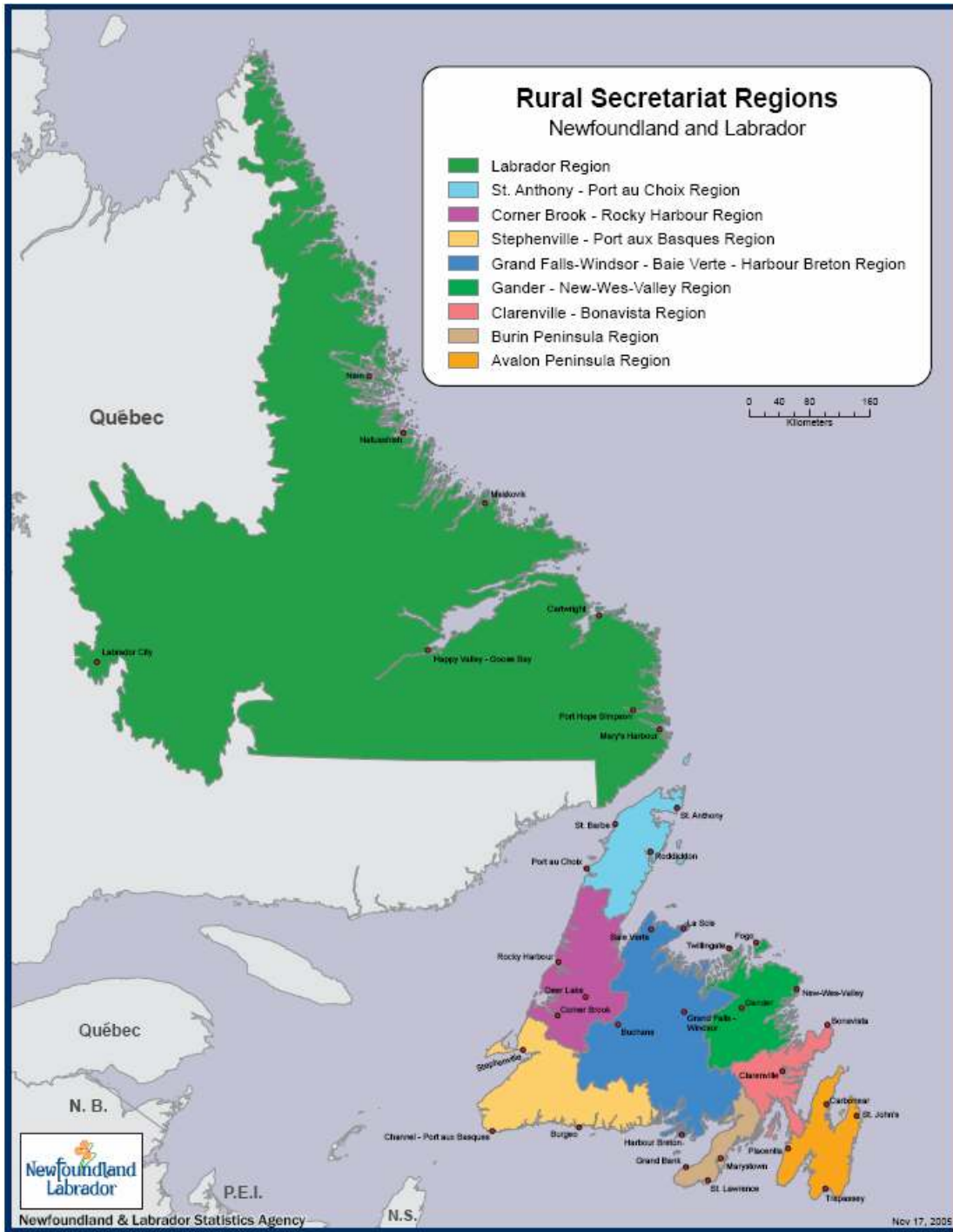
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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,



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