

Clarenville Bonavista Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

Annual Activity Report 2005-06



Cape Random

Message from the Chair

We, as council members, have prepared the 2005-06 Annual Activity Report for the Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. As Chairperson, I submit and sign this annual activity report on behalf of the council as a symbol of the council's accountability for the results achieved and any variances contained herein.

The mandate of the Regional Council for the Rural Secretariat is to advise government on the future sustainability of the Clarenville-Bonavista region. To be effective in this process, it has been important for council members to understand the key issues affecting current program development and future policy direction as these affect citizens residing in our 109 communities.

The Clarenville-Bonavista 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.

The Regional Council has been very busy understanding issues related to demographic change, infrastructure, skills development, private sector investment and the provision of public services and programs.

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. This process will assist the council in its development of a vision of sustainability for the region, which will require future dialogue with government and community.

I look forward to the work ahead.

Sincerely,



Ms. Violet Parsons
Chair
Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

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Regional Council Overview

The Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council consists of men and women from larger and smaller communities with backgrounds in social, business, labour, cultural and environmental development.

The Clarenville-Bonavista Regional Council is comprised of 14 members; 7 female and 7 male. Members of the council have a variety of backgrounds that include health, education, municipal governance, agriculture, culture, business, skill development for women and financial management.

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

<i>Name</i>	<i>Community</i>
Violet Parson- Chairperson	Bloomfield
Leo Bonnell	Clarenville
William (Bill) Abbott	Bonavista
Donald Mifflin	Bonavista
Shelly Blackmore	Port Union
Edith Samson	Port Union
Marilyn Coles-Hayley	Elliston
Darryl Johnson	Port Union
Barry Pearce	Port Rexton
Lisa Browne	Clarenville
Paul Tilley	Shoal Harbour
Maria Moran	St. Jones Within
Mervin Wiseman	North Harbour
Fay Matthews	Arnold's Cove

*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 Clarenville-Bonavista region is Colin Holloway. Colin works out of Bonavista and his office is co-located within the College of the North Atlantic.

Overview of the Region

The Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat region includes the Bonavista Peninsula, Clarenville area and the Isthmus- extending from the tip of the Bonavista Peninsula to Terra Nova, Swift Current and Long Harbour. Deep rooted in John Cabot's discovery of this province in 1497, the region has a long history in diversification of people, culture, and economic activity.

The population of the Clarenville-Bonavista Rural Secretariat region is estimated at 28,870 in 2006 living in 109 communities. This is a decline of 9.2% from 1999 (compared with a decline of 3.7% for the province overall). The population is expected to drop to about 28,000 by 2011, a further decline of 3.2% (compared to decline of 1.2% for the province overall).

The largest communities in the region are Bonavista and Clarenville, with each having populations over 4000. Arnold's Cove and Catalina are considered medium-sized communities, with populations between 1000-2000. As well, there are approximately 105 other towns with less than one thousand residents and these small communities constituted 44% of the region's population.

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 20,118 in 2006, a decline of 9.0% from 1999. This age group is expected to fall by 4.4% to 2011, outpacing overall population decline. This difference can be attributed to continued out-migration from the region combined with fewer youth entering the Labour Market.

Within the ages 15-64 age group, 21.7% are ages 55 to 64. This means, in broad terms, that about one in five 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 wage rates as the Labour Market tightens.

While the population is declining, the Labour Market, measured in terms of the number of people with earned income, was stable between 1999 and 2004 at about 15,500 individuals. After adjusting for inflation, the average earned income per worker employed grew by 12.5% over this period, outpacing provincial real growth of 9.0%. Growth in real earned income also allowed for strong growth in real personal income per capita over this period (14.8% versus 15.2% for the province overall). This trend means, however, that personal income per capita in the region is not converging toward the provincial average. Per capita income in the region was 90.3% of the provincial average in 2004 compared to 90.6% in 1999.

In summary, while the population of the region is declining, the Labour Market is stable, and those that remain are experiencing relatively strong earned income growth.

On an occupational basis, the fishery (harvesting and processing) employed 2,765 in 2000, or about 20% of employment, in the Clarenville-Bonavista region compared to 10% for the province overall. This meant that 11.9% of total fisheries related employment in the province, but only 5.6% of the population, accrued to the Clarenville-Bonavista region.

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 45.4% of employment in the region, and 44.2% of EI beneficiaries in 2005. Overall, there were 8,150 EI beneficiaries in the region in 2005, or just over one EI claim for every two people with earned income. The region accounted for 6.8% of total provincial EI beneficiaries in 2005 but only 5.6% of the population.

The educational profile of workers in the region is generally aligned with the occupational structure. Just over 1,300 individuals between ages 18-64 (6.8%) had a university degree in 2000 compared with over 6,100 individuals with a trades or college level certificate (32.8%). Overall, therefore, 38.5% of individuals ages 18-64 in the Clarenville-Bonavista region had completed post secondary studies. (This compares to 43.6% for the province overall).

At the same time, 41.3% of this age group in the region has 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), 62.1% have not completed high school. Conversely, considering younger workers only (those ages 25-29), 36.0% fall in this category.

The population data used is based on information published by the Economics and Statistics Branch, June 2006. The estimates have since been updated. For example, as of June 2006, the 2006 population estimate has been revised from 513,510 to about 509,700. Further revisions are expected following the release of the 2006 Census results.

Employment and earned income data is based on tax filer residency information not place of work. For example, those working in Alberta but filing taxes in the Clarenville-Bonavista region would show as being employed and earning income in the Clarenville-Bonavista region.

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 at 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 Trinity and Princeton 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.

Although the Regional Council met only a few times, some of the learning to date includes:

thinking regionally, the provincial budget, considering the importance of regionalism, sustainability and using evidence-based decision making in discussing policy and program issues. As well, discussions have taken into consideration four guiding principles: sustainable; achievable; realistic and affordable or what the council now refers to as the **SARA** Principle.

They have also established four working groups to further explore the dynamics associated with the five pillars for regional sustainability: 1. demographics; 2. private sector investments; 3. infrastructure, 4. skills development and 5. provision of public services and programs.

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. These discussions will consider the SARA principle under the five themes or pillars

for regional sustainability.

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.

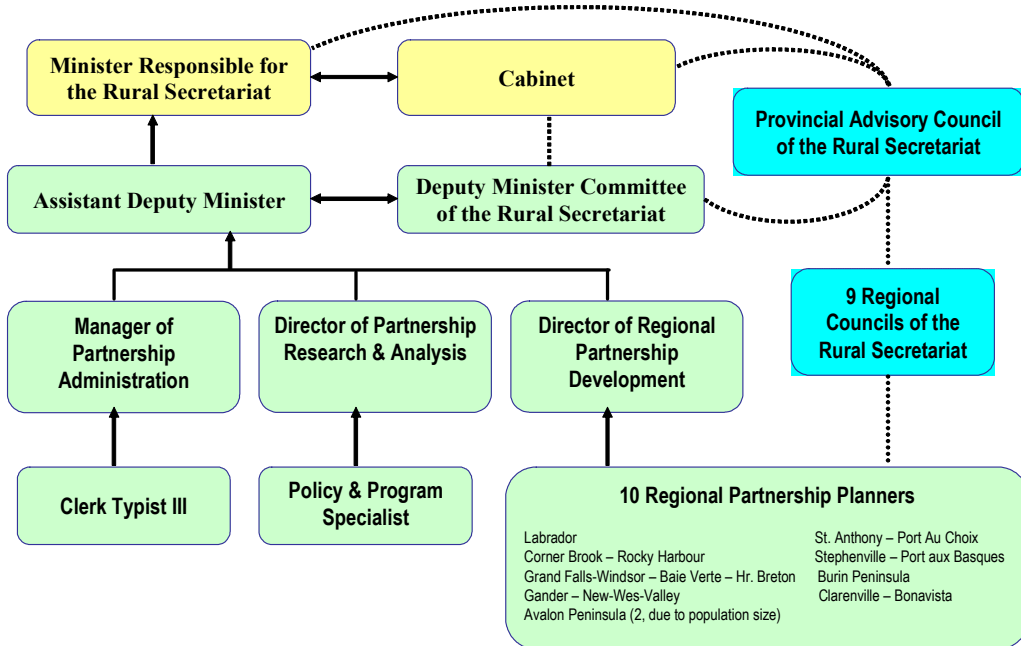
2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability

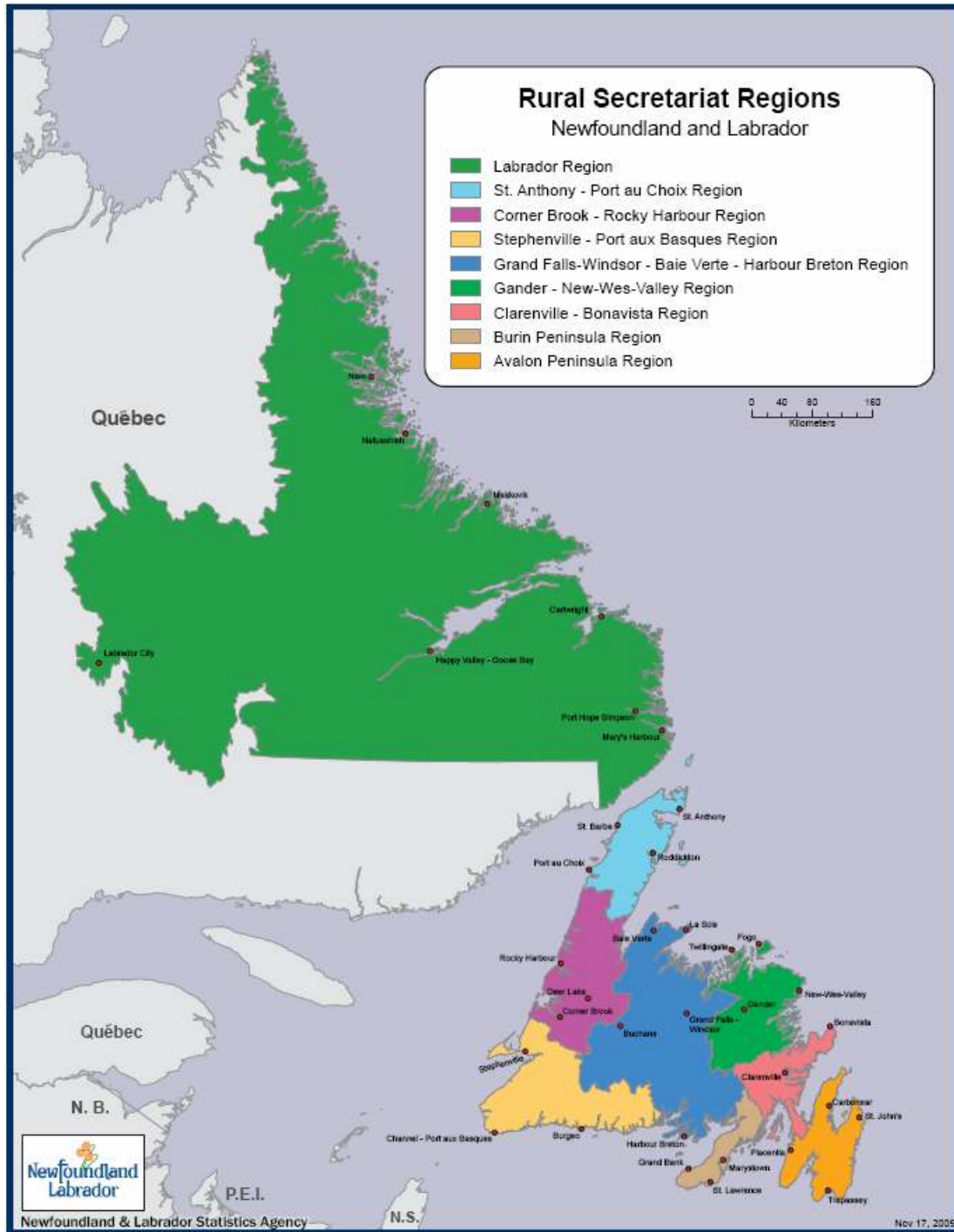
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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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to

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