

Grand Fall-Windsor— Baie Verte—Harbour Breton
Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

Annual Activity Report
2005-06



Glover's Harbour, NL

Message from the Chair



The Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat 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. This process will inform citizens about key statistics, data and trends in the province as well as providing people with the opportunity to share their knowledge, experience and ideas on regional sustainability.

As Chairperson for Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton 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.

All council members realize the challenges facing the region and are looking forward to the coming year. As one member cited, "*Things cannot remain as they are; we prefer to influence change.*"

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Debbie Armstrong'.

Debbie Armstrong, Chairperson

Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat

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Regional Council Overview

The Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Regional Council of the Rural Secretariat is comprised of 16 members; 6 female and 10 male. Members of the council have a variety of backgrounds that include social, economic, cultural and environmental areas.

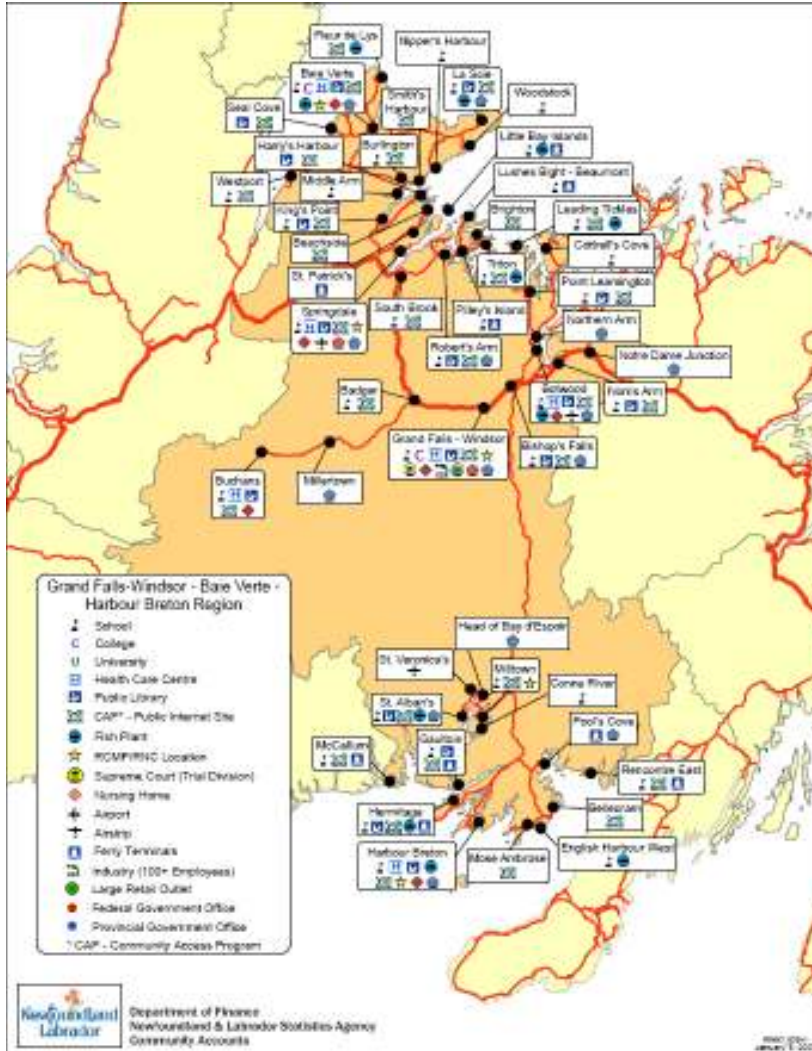
Council has representation from larger and smaller communities throughout the region:

| Name | Community |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Charlie Ennis | Baie Verte |
| Steward May | Belleoram |
| Joe McGrath | Bishop's Falls |
| Jerry Dean | Botwood |
| Hubert Langdon | English Harbour West |
| Deborah Armstrong | Grand Falls-Windsor |
| Karen Beresford | Grand Falls-Windsor |
| Don Stewart | Harbour Breton |
| David Hayashida | King's Point |
| John Price | La Scie |
| Sheena Ward | Leading Ticks |
| Bernice Walker | Norris Arm |
| Danny Huxter | Springdale |
| Kevin Pollard | Springdale |
| Tracey Perry | St. Alban's |
| Joan Strickland | St. Alban's |

**For an up-to-date listing of Regional Council members 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 region is Linda Brett. Linda works out of an office in Springdale.

Overview of the Region



Summary Infrastructure Map for the Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton Region of the Rural Secretariat

The Grand Falls-Windsor – Baie Verte – Harbour Breton region encompasses the Baie Verte Peninsula, Green Bay, and Exploits Valley stretching along the northern coastline from Botwood to Fortune Harbour. The region extends through the interior of the province, reaching as far as Buchans, and concludes on the southern coast bound by the Connaigre Peninsula, Bay D’Espoir area and Fortune Bay North.

Central West’s many assets include a strong aquaculture industry in mussels, salmon and rainbow trout; a fledging tourism industry based on outdoor adventure and local heritage; a robust mining production in copper, zinc, silver and gold; agriculture, extending from traditional root crops

to experimental berry and peat moss farms; vigorous craft enterprises creating designer

hand bags to long established hooked rugs; competitive manufacturing businesses that fabricate metal components, fiberglass boats, and pharmaceutical compounds; and an aggressive technology sector providing graphic design, computer programming and outsource call services.

Residents of this region have access to an integrated health care and education network. The health care system has embraced a Health Circle model which places a focus on preventative care without losing necessary support for acute and long term care patients. Family Resource Centers and a strong K to12 grade system with public and private post-secondary options are

available to the populace. Life long learning, an accepted philosophy, offers adult literacy classes in specific locations throughout the region.

Central West is host to national standard hiking trails, spectacular seascape lookouts, excellent kayaking routes along secluded coastlines, and heritage sites and museums. It is home to the giant squid, the Dorset Paleo-Eskimo rock quarry and Conne River's annual Pow Wow. Central West is also home to Rex Goudie, Shaun Majurnder, Brad Brown, Brian Peckford, Gordon Pinsent, and Natasha Henstridge.

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 (1 face-to-face meeting and 3 teleconference calls).

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.

In subsequent meetings the council was presented with information on economic, demographic and social challenges and opportunities within the region, and began discussing these challenges and opportunities. A detailed inventory of what the council perceived as regional assets was compiled, as well as a listing of regional strengths.

During this time, council members broadened their understanding of the region as a whole and became more knowledgeable of the linkages between economic, social, environmental and cultural aspects of sustainable development.

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.

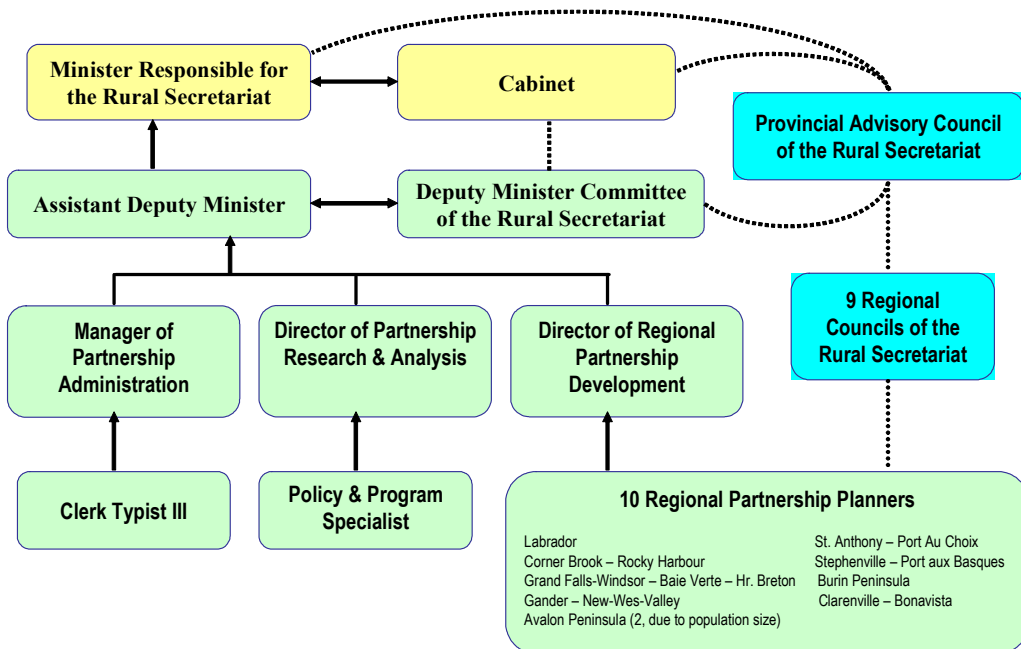
2. Title: Assessment of Policy on Regional Sustainability

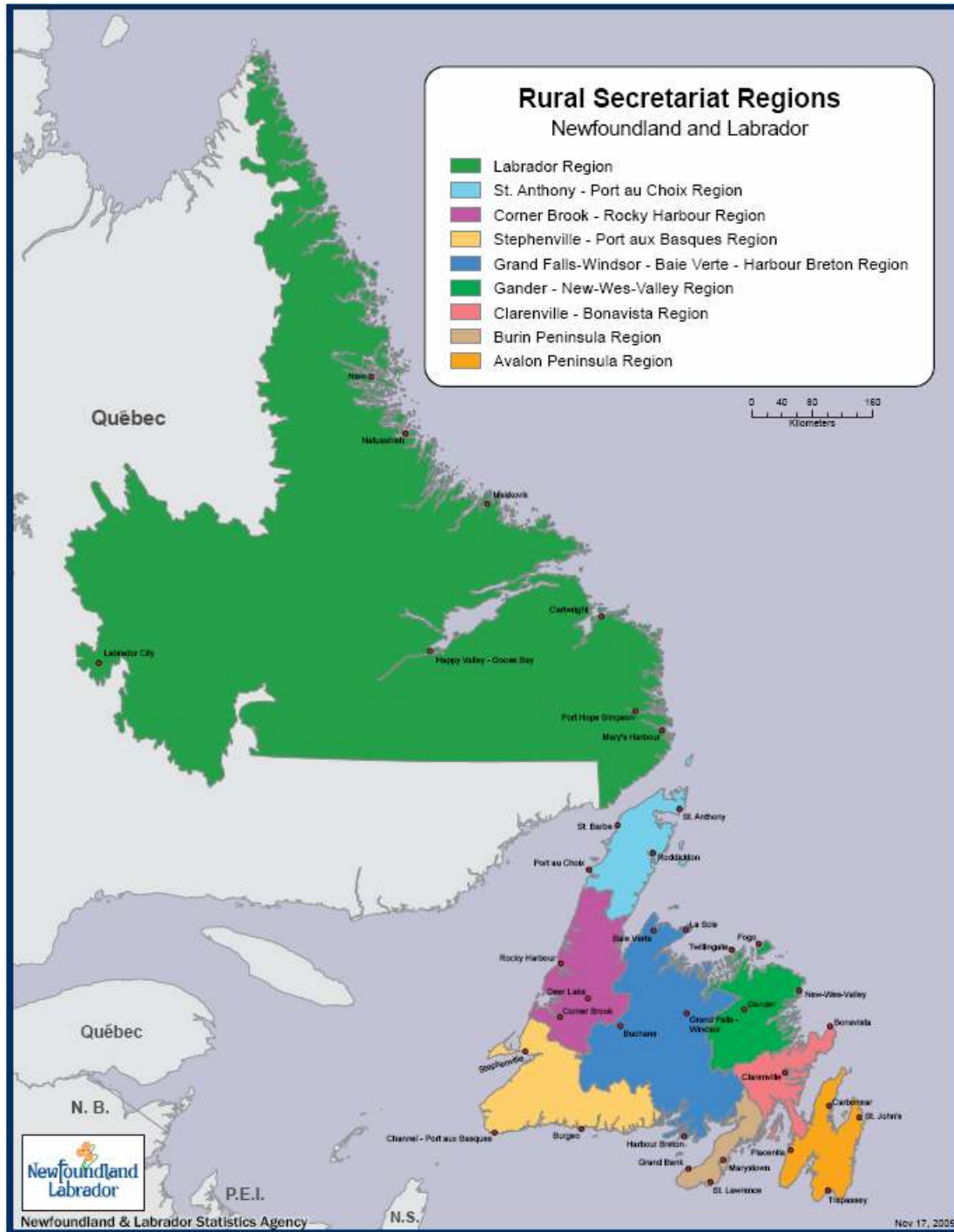
Outcome Statement: Improved Government understanding of and response to significant and long-term regional issues.

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,



Please direct correspondence for the

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