

# Strategic Plan

2011 to 2014

Department of Municipal Affairs



## Message from the Minister

It is my pleasure to present the strategic plan for the Department of Municipal Affairs for the period April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2014. In addition to identifying our goals for the upcoming three years, this plan defines our mission for a six-year period, April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2017. The plan also includes our vision, mandate, lines of business and operational characteristics.

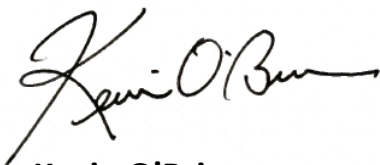
The Department of Municipal Affairs is dedicated to undertaking initiatives to strengthen local governments and community infrastructure throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Through services such as providing funding for infrastructure and municipal operations, and fostering cooperation between communities, the Department supports the long-term viability of communities.

Over the next three years we will undertake initiatives to address three major issues: appropriate municipal infrastructure, strong local governments, and local government sustainability. By addressing these issues, my Department intends to support local governments in providing residents access to reliable, effective and efficient services for today, and in years to come.

We have prepared the plan in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. As Minister, I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and for achieving the goals and objectives it identifies.

Sincerely yours,



**Kevin O'Brien**  
Minister



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# 1.0 Plan at a Glance

## Vision

The vision of the Department of Municipal Affairs is of communities with viable, sustainable municipal services led by strong local governments.

## Mission

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Municipal Affairs will have strengthened infrastructure investments and supports to local governments.

	APPROPRIATE MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE	STRONG LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY
2011-14 GOALS	Enhanced measures to obtain optimum value in municipal infrastructure investments	Enhanced policies and procedures to strengthen support to local governments	Identified options for local government sustainability
2012 OBJECTIVE	Developed a draft framework for obtaining optimum value for municipal infrastructure investments	Conducted a review of policies and procedures	Identified local government sustainability opportunities by undertaking 30 community capacity assessments, 10 regional cooperation opportunities assessments, and meeting with communities to discuss opportunities
2013 OBJECTIVE	Piloted the draft optimum value municipal infrastructure framework for select municipal infrastructure projects	Enhanced policies and procedures	Identified local government sustainability opportunities by undertaking an additional 50 community capacity assessments, 15 regional cooperation opportunities assessments, and meeting with communities to discuss opportunities
2014 OBJECTIVE	Applied the optimum value municipal infrastructure framework to all municipal infrastructure projects	Conducted municipal training on new policies and procedures	Identified local government sustainability opportunities by undertaking an additional 50 community capacity assessments, 15 regional cooperation opportunities assessments, and meeting with communities to discuss opportunities

## 2.0 Departmental Overview

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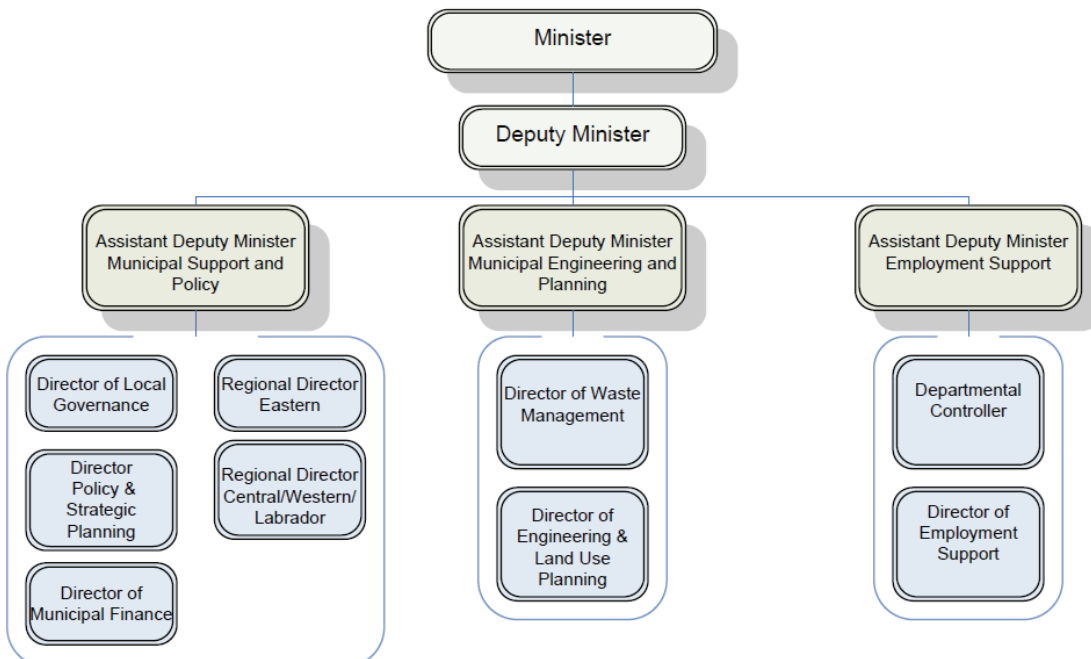
The Department of Municipal Affairs delivers programs and services to ensure people enjoy healthy, safe and sustainable communities supported by strong local governments. The Department supports the financial stability and viability of municipalities and the efficient and effective delivery of municipal services. The Department assists municipalities in meeting their infrastructure needs and provides the financial and administrative tools to support sound municipal governance.

The Department also supports a number of key Government level initiatives, including the Waste Management Strategy, the Northern Strategic Plan and the Drinking Water Safety Initiative.

### Organizational Structure

The Department delivers its programs and services through three branches: Municipal Support and Policy, Municipal Engineering and Planning, and Employment Support. The three branches deliver five main lines of business: Local Governance, Municipal Infrastructure and Engineering Services, Employment Support, Provincial Affairs and Financial Services.

While Fire and Emergency Services – Newfoundland and Labrador is accountable to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, under Government’s accountability requirements, the agency has its own business plan and annual report. The Municipal Assessment Agency also reports to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, but it also has its own business plan and annual report.



## Budget

The Department's approved budget for fiscal year 2011-12 is \$301.9 million. Approximately \$299.3 million or 99.1 per cent is budgeted for financial assistance to municipalities through such programs as financial support for municipal infrastructure development, municipal operating grants, debt relief and special assistance. The remaining \$2.6 million or 0.9 per cent is directed to expenditures in salaries and operating costs to deliver programs and services. The Department's 2011-12 budget includes federal revenues of \$73 million to offset total funding such that the net Provincial funding is \$228.9 million.

## Staff Complement

In 2011, the Department had a total staff complement of 116 positions (64 males and 52 females), which includes 17 financial services positions that also provide financial management support to four other Government departments and two agencies. The educational backgrounds and skills of Departmental staff are diverse and reflect the Department's role in providing expertise to local governments in the areas of financial management, municipal administration, engineering, land use planning, employment support, legislative interpretation, and training for elected and non-elected municipal officials.

The Department's headquarters is located in St. John's. Primary public services offered through this office are: municipal programs and policy development; project management for municipal infrastructure projects; waste management; industrial water supply; land use planning; municipal financing support; legislative development and interpretation; municipal training; and short-term employment creation.

Four regional offices are located in: St. John's (Eastern Region), Gander (Central Region), Corner Brook (Western Region), and Happy Valley–Goose Bay (Labrador Region). Primary services offered by the regional offices are: municipal infrastructure project assessments and project management, municipal training, and legislative and administrative support.

The Department also maintains staff in Clarenville, whose primary function is to provide municipal infrastructure project assessments and project management with respect to water systems projects.

Staff complement by location is as follows:

Location	Staff Complement
St. John's - Headquarters	77
St. John's – Eastern Regional Office	13
Clarenville	1
Gander	8
Corner Brook – Western Regional Office	11
Happy Valley-Goose Bay	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>

## 3.0 Mandate

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The mandate of the Department of Municipal Affairs is derived from the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs Notice, 2003 under the *Executive Council Act*, and is informed by the legislation set out in the Schedule (see Appendix B for a list of Acts in the Schedule) which outlines the powers, duties and functions of the Minister, who is also appointed Registrar General. The Department of Municipal Affairs is directly responsible for all matters relating to municipal and provincial affairs.

The Department is a Category 1 entity under the Province's *Transparency and Accountability Act*, and is required to prepare 3-year strategic plans and annual performance reports in compliance with the *Act*.

## 4.0 Lines of Business

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Lines of business are the major programs, products or services provided to our primary clients. The Department of Municipal Affairs has five main lines of business: Local Governance, Municipal Infrastructure and Engineering Services, Employment Support, Provincial Affairs, and Financial Services. These lines of business are outlined below:

### Local Governance

The Department strengthens local governance by:

- formulating land use policy and regional approaches to service delivery;
- providing municipal training to elected and administrative officials;
- providing legislative interpretation to assist in the development of municipal by-laws;
- advising local government officials;
- conducting reviews of municipal administrative matters;
- administering grants and subsidies for community infrastructure;
- examining local governments' financial operations;
- monitoring levels of debt;
- providing operational support;
- participating in inter-provincial policy development and knowledge sharing; and
- supporting regional cooperation initiatives.

### Municipal Infrastructure and Engineering Services

The Department guides infrastructure investments by:

- assessing needs and prioritizing municipal infrastructure investments;
- providing financial support for the development of municipal infrastructure;
- monitoring and providing guidance and advice on municipal infrastructure projects; and
- negotiating and managing federal-provincial agreements for municipal infrastructure funding.

## Employment Support

The Department works with local, community-based sponsors to create short-term employment initiatives that provide enduring benefits to communities. Additionally, Government has assigned the Department the responsibility to provide similar employment support programs in areas affected by permanent closure of fish processing plants and to coordinate interdepartmental efforts to assist workers affected by permanent fish plant closures.

## Provincial Affairs

The Department has statutory responsibilities in relation to the following provincial affairs:

- coordinating annual ceremonies to honour our veterans;
- approving the use of legislated provincial identification symbols;
- prescribing and evoking *Newfoundland Daylight Time*;
- Great Seal of the Province; and
- Registrar General for the Province.

## Financial Services

The Strategic Financial Management Division supports the financial management in the following Government departments and agencies: Department of Municipal Affairs, Department of Government Services, Department of Environment and Conservation, Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development, Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, the Government Purchasing Agency, and Fire and Emergency Services-NL.

## 5.0 Primary Clients

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The primary clients of the Department of Municipal Affairs are the 272 municipalities, 5 Inuit Community Governments, and 178 local service districts in Newfoundland and Labrador. Based on the 2006 census, 89 per cent of the provincial population resides within municipalities or Inuit communities, approximately 7 per cent reside in local service districts and 4 per cent are in unincorporated areas. The Department also provides support to three Regional Service Boards which provide municipal services on a regional basis.

Some of the major groups that we serve include:

- Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador (MNL);
- Professional Municipal Administrators (PMA);
- Combined Councils of Labrador; and
- Regional Waste Management Authorities and Committees.



## 6.0 Values

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The core values explain the character the Department wants to promote. The value action statements ensure the core values are visible throughout the organization by identifying specific actions that can be observed during the period of this strategic plan.

### Core Values

### Value Action Statements

***Excellence***

*Individuals perform each task to the best of their ability.*

***Respect***

*Individuals provide opportunities for others to express their opinions in an open and safe environment.*

***Creativity***

*Individuals seek innovative solutions to support delivery of effective and efficient local government services.*

***Teamwork***

*Individuals seek to fulfil their role in the Department's mission of strengthening infrastructure investments and supports to local governments.*

## 7.0 Vision

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The vision of the Department of Municipal Affairs is of communities with viable, sustainable municipal services led by strong local governments.

## 8.0 Mission

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The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the Minister over two strategic planning cycles. It represents the key longer-term result that the Minister and the Department will be working towards as they move forward on the strategic directions of Government. The statement also identifies the measure and indicators that will assist both the Department and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

In carrying out its mission, the Department of Municipal Affairs will contribute to two of Government's strategic directions: appropriate infrastructure investment and local government sustainability. With regard to appropriate infrastructure investment, the Department will work towards the outcome of appropriate infrastructure to meet community needs by focusing on life cycle costing. With regard to local government sustainability, the Department will work towards the outcome of strengthened local government by focusing on community capacity assessments, and enhanced policies and procedures.

Local governments are facing many challenges – changing population levels, increasing costs for infrastructure, and the requirement to deliver services that meet new environmental standards. Many communities are facing these challenges with limited financial and human resources. The Department is committed to assisting all communities to meet the needs of their residents in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Given these challenges, the long term mission is:

**By March 31, 2017, the Department of Municipal Affairs will have strengthened infrastructure investments and supports to local governments.**

**Performance Measure:** Strengthened infrastructure investments and supports to local governments

**Indicators:**

- Increased number of infrastructure projects utilizing life cycle analysis
- Decreased number of dumpsites across the Province
- Increased number of communities with access to water that meets the Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines
- Enhanced policies and procedures
- Conducted community capacity assessments
- Conducted regional cooperation opportunities assessments
- Conducted meetings with communities to discuss sustainability opportunities.

## 9.0 Issues

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In consideration of Government's strategic directions and the mandate and financial resources of the Department, the following areas have been identified as the key priorities of the Minister for the next three years: appropriate municipal infrastructure, strong local governments and local government sustainability. The goals identified for each issue reflect the results expected in the three year timeframe while the objectives provide an annual focus. Measures and indicators are provided for both the goal and the first year's objective to assist both the Department and the public in monitoring and evaluating success. Targets and benchmarks will be developed in this planning cycle. Gender based analysis will be conducted on all measures and indicators and gender breakdowns will be reported where applicable.

### 1. APPROPRIATE MUNICIPAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Municipal infrastructure is a primary responsibility of local governments. Local governments must not only contribute to the initial capital cost, but also provide ongoing funding to operate and maintain the infrastructure over its life span. It is critical that local governments are supported in selecting the best infrastructure to meet their needs, both in the short and long term, at an affordable price.

The Department of Municipal Affairs plays a critical role in assessing the best value for municipal infrastructure investments. Infrastructure projects require various levels of assessment depending on the complexity of the projects. A life cycle analysis is used to inform the best investment options over the long term. Through the implementation of an infrastructure framework, enhanced policies, and staff training on life cycle analysis, the Department will commit to obtaining optimum value in future municipal infrastructure investments.

Appropriate infrastructure investment is a strategic Government direction related to the Department of Municipal Affairs and life cycle costing is a critical component for achieving the outcome of appropriate infrastructure to meet community needs.

**Goal 1:** By March 31, 2014 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have enhanced measures to obtain optimum value in municipal infrastructure investments.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATORS
Enhanced measures to obtain optimum value in municipal infrastructure investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed framework for obtaining optimum value infrastructure</li> <li>• Implemented policies on life cycle analysis</li> <li>• Increased number of infrastructure projects utilizing life cycle analysis</li> <li>• Assessed all infrastructure projects with optimum value infrastructure framework</li> <li>• Conducted staff training on framework and life cycle analysis</li> <li>• Conducted initiatives to communicate new municipal infrastructure policy requirements</li> </ul>

**2011-12 Objective:** By March 31, 2012 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have developed a draft framework for obtaining optimum value for municipal infrastructure investments.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATORS
Developed a draft framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determined types of infrastructure which require a life cycle analysis</li> <li>• Developed draft policies</li> <li>• Updated engineering project guidelines</li> <li>• Completed draft framework document</li> <li>• Conducted staff training on draft framework and life cycle analysis</li> </ul>

**2012-13 Objective:** By March 31, 2013 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have piloted the draft optimum value municipal infrastructure framework for select municipal infrastructure projects.

**2013-14 Objective:** By March 31, 2014 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have applied the optimum value municipal infrastructure framework to all municipal infrastructure projects.

## 2. STRONG LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The public has increasingly high expectations for accountability of governments at all levels, and residents demand that modern services be delivered in the most cost-effective manner. In some cases, the Department's policies and procedures which provide the framework in which local governments operate may not provide sufficient supports to local governments to effectively and efficiently deliver programs and services. The Department of Municipal Affairs will enhance its policies and procedures in order to provide local governments with the most effective tools available to address the needs of their residents.

Local government sustainability is a strategic Government direction related to the Department of Municipal Affairs and policies and procedures are critical components for achieving the outcome of strengthened local government.

**Goal 2:** By March 31, 2014 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have enhanced policies and procedures to strengthen support to local governments.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATORS
<b>Strengthened support local governments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced Departmental policies and procedures</li> <li>• Enhanced local government financial and operational accountability</li> <li>• Conducted municipal training</li> </ul>

**2011-12 Objective:** By March 31, 2012 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have conducted a review of policies and procedures.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATORS
<b>Conducted review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewed Departmental policies and procedures</li> <li>• Conducted consultations with stakeholders</li> <li>• Identified priority areas to be addressed</li> </ul>

**2012-13 Objective:** By March 31, 2013 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have enhanced policies and procedures.

**2013-14 Objective:** By March 31, 2014 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have conducted municipal training on new policies and procedures.

### 3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY

Many small rural communities are facing sustainability challenges with decreasing populations and tax revenues, and increasing demands for services. Recently a number of communities in geographic proximity to each other have implemented a variety of measures to optimize their revenues and increase service delivery capacity.

The Department of Municipal Affairs recognizes the importance of identifying the sustainability opportunities available to local governments. The Department will develop assessment frameworks on community capacity and regional cooperation to guide informed decision making on sustainability opportunities. Through the development of community capacity and regional cooperation opportunities assessments, the Department will identify specific opportunities tailored to community and regional needs and communicate these results to communities. Communities will have the option to further explore these opportunities, including working collaboratively with each other to increase the sustainability of local governments.

Local government sustainability is a strategic Government direction related to the Department of Municipal Affairs and community capacity assessments are a critical component for achieving the outcome of strengthened local governments.

**Goal 3:** By March 31, 2014 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have identified options for local government sustainability.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATORS
<b>Identified options for local government sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted 130 community capacity assessments</li> <li>• Conducted 40 regional cooperation opportunities assessments</li> <li>• Number of meetings with communities regarding community capacity assessments and regional cooperation opportunities</li> </ul>

**2011-12 Objective:** By March 31, 2012 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have identified local government sustainability opportunities by undertaking 30 community capacity assessments, 10 regional cooperation opportunities assessments, and meeting with communities to discuss opportunities.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	INDICATORS
<b>Identified local government sustainability opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulted with other Government Departments</li> <li>• Developed community capacity assessment framework</li> <li>• Developed regional cooperation opportunities assessment framework</li> <li>• Completed 30 community capacity assessments</li> <li>• Completed 10 regional cooperation opportunities assessments</li> <li>• Number of meetings with communities regarding community capacity assessments and regional cooperation opportunities</li> </ul>

**2012-13 Objective:** By March 31, 2013 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have identified local government sustainability opportunities by undertaking an additional 50 community capacity assessments, 15 regional cooperation opportunities assessments, and meeting with communities to discuss opportunities.

**2013-14 Objective:** By March 31, 2014 the Department of Municipal Affairs will have identified local government sustainability opportunities by undertaking an additional 50 community capacity assessments, 15 regional cooperation opportunities assessments, and meeting with communities to discuss opportunities.

# 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 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 Department of Municipal Affairs are provided below. Each strategic direction is comprised of a number of components, or focus areas. These focus areas will be addressed as follows:

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: APPROPRIATE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

**Outcome:** Appropriate infrastructure to meet community needs

Components of Strategic Direction	This Direction is addressed in the:			
	Department's strategic plan	Department's operational plan	Branch/ divisional work plans of the Department	Plans of other entities reporting to the Minister
1. Life cycle costing	✓			
2. Safe drinking water			✓	
3. Solid waste management		✓		



**STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY****Outcome: Strengthened Local Government**

<b>Components of Strategic Direction</b>	<b>This Direction is addressed in the:</b>			
	<b>Department's strategic plan</b>	<b>Department's operational plan</b>	<b>Branch/ divisional work plans of the Department</b>	<b>Plans of other entities reporting to the Minister</b>
<b>1. Community cooperation</b>		✓		
<b>2. Community capacity assessments</b>	✓			
<b>3. Modern legislation</b>			✓	
<b>4. Policies and procedures</b>	✓			
<b>5. Working with stakeholders</b>			✓	
<b>6. Municipal training</b>			✓	

# Appendix B

## Legislative Acts

The Minister is responsible for:

- Assessment Act
- Avian Emblem Act
- Building Standards Act
- City of Corner Brook Act
- City of Mount Pearl Act
- City of St. John's Act
- Coat of Arms Act
- Commemoration Day Act
- Crown Corporations Local Taxation Act
- Emergency Measures Act
- Evacuated Communities Act
- Family Homes Expropriation Act
- Fire Prevention Act, 1991
- Firefighter's Protection Act
- Floral Emblem Act
- Housing Act
- Housing Association Loans Act
- Labrador Act
- Mineral Emblem Act
- Municipal Affairs Act
- Municipal Authorities Amendment Act
- Municipal Elections Act
- Municipalities Act, 1999
- Provincial Anthem Act
- Provincial Flag Act
- Regional Service Boards Act
- Remembrance Day Act
- St. John's Assessment Act
- St. John's Centennial Foundation Act
- St. John's Municipal Council Parks Act
- Standard Time Act
- Urban and Rural Planning Act, 2000
- Taxation of Utilities and Cable Television Companies Act