

Strategic Plan

2026-2029

Tourism, Culture,
Arts and Recreation





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

As Minister of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation, I am pleased to present the Department's Strategic Plan for the period of April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2029. In accordance with the obligations of a category one entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, this plan was prepared under my direction, and I am accountable for the achievement of the goals and objectives contained therein.

The 2026-29 Strategic Plan outlines the objectives and activities of the Department in its support of the Provincial Government's Strategic Directions of building a showstopping arts and tourism industry, rebuilding a stronger economy, and adopting active lifestyles. In applying these Strategic Directions, the Department will work to create a thriving tourism industry, strengthen our culture through arts and heritage, and support active living opportunities for all of us.

By signing below, I undertake the necessary accountability for the outcomes reported in support of our stated goals. I wish to acknowledge the efforts and expertise of the Department's staff as critical to the successes that will be achieved throughout the planning period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Barbour". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Hon. Andrea Barbour
Minister of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation

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Overview

The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation (the Department) is the lead for tourism, arts and culture, sport and recreation, film and television, and Provincial Parks. The Department is one of the province's largest operators of tourism, culture, heritage and recreation facilities including Arts and Culture Centres, Provincial Historic Sites, Provincial Parks, Visitor Information Centres, and Provincial Pools. The Department is responsible for supporting economic growth and employment in the tourism industry, attracting major events, cultivating contemporary arts, preserving the province's cultural heritage, operating and managing Provincial Parks, growing the film and television sector, and promoting and supporting physical activity for individuals, groups, and communities, through the development of policy and programs that support provincial sport and recreation.

Additionally, the Department advances strategic tourism product development; markets Newfoundland and Labrador to key visitor markets; and supports the tourism industry through research, opportunity identification, and strategy development. The Department provides regulatory protection for archaeological sites, artifacts, and historic documents; and supports the arts, heritage, sport and recreation sectors through targeted programs and services.

The Department has three executive branches:

- (1) Tourism and Parks;
- (2) Arts, Culture, Film and Television; and,
- (3) Sport and Recreation.

The Corporate Services Division reports to the Deputy Minister of the Department. Additional information regarding the Department can be found on its [website](#).

Strategic Plan 2026-2029

In accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, the Department has taken the Government's strategic directions (Annex A refers) into account during the development of this strategic plan, including development of strategic issues, goals, objectives and associated indicators. Specifically, the Department works to achieve these strategic directions by promoting our creative and cultural industries, making Newfoundland and Labrador a destination of choice, developing and promoting the province's film and television sector, and promoting active lifestyles. Entities which report to the Minister, and the Department's legislation are provided in Annex B and C.

As of April 1, 2026, the Department is comprised of 99 permanent, 65 temporary, 145 seasonal and six contractual employees for a total of 315 staff members. The Department's total budget for fiscal 2026-27 is \$79,103,100. Of this amount, \$29,021,300 is allocated to the Tourism and Parks Branch to support the operation of 32 Provincial Parks; market and sector research; event attraction; tourism product development; and the implementation of a fully integrated marketing program targeted to resident and non-resident visitor markets. These investments are designed to position the province as a unique tourism destination and support economic growth. Appropriations also provide funding for the coordination, and operation of Visitor Information Centres and services, as well as expenditures related to the Atlantic Canada Agreement on Tourism.

The Arts, Culture, Film and Television Branch budget comprises \$37,632,900 and is dedicated to the operations of the six Arts and Culture Centres, the preservation, management, development and promotion of our arts and heritage through legislative oversight, the operation and maintenance of the Provincial Historic Sites network; Provincial Archaeology Office regulatory supports and programs, funding and advisory support to the arts and heritage sectors; and cultural events, commemorations and other celebrations.

The Sport and Recreation Branch budget comprises \$10,110,700 in support of physical activity, sport and recreation in the province, and for the promotion of wellness and support for wellness initiatives implemented throughout the province.

Mandate

The Department has a diverse mandate that focuses on the following key areas:

- a) marketing the province as a tourism destination and providing tourism visitor services and information through the operation of visitor information centres, a responsive internet presence and the delivery of contact centre services;
- b) supporting tourism market research and product development and competitiveness;
- c) supporting arts and culture in the province, including Arts and Culture Centres, The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council and the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation;
- d) protecting and preserving the archaeological and paleontological resources, built and intangible heritage, and other historic resources of the province, including Provincial Historic Sites, Provincial Regional Museums and the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador;
- e) partnering with communities, organizations and other governments to commemorate important wartime milestones and honour sacrifices of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians;
- f) the management, preservation, control, protection and development of Provincial Parks, as defined in the **Provincial Parks Act**;
- g) supporting sport, recreation and physical activity delivery systems to promote active living for individuals and communities across the province; and
- h) developing and promoting the province's film and television industry and promoting the province as a destination for film and television production.

Lines of Business

The Department's lines of business for its three branches (Tourism and Parks, Arts, Culture, Film and Television, and Sport and Recreation) include the following:

Support Tourism and Parks in the Province:

The Department advances the growth and sustainability of the tourism industry as a key contributor to the provincial economy, supporting rural communities, job creation, and entrepreneurship across Newfoundland and Labrador. This work includes tourism market and sector research, strategic product development in collaboration with industry, communities, and regional partners, attracting major events, the management and oversight of 32 Provincial Parks, and the delivery of coordinated, award-winning tourism marketing initiatives. In partnership with the Government of Canada and other stakeholders, the Department markets the province nationally and internationally to attract visitors and investment, strengthen tourism competitiveness, and support long-term economic growth.

Support Arts and Heritage in the Province: The Department supports initiatives with partners to protect, develop, promote, and celebrate Newfoundland and Labrador's vibrant culture. It engages arts and heritage organizations on cultural financing, policy, and programs. It provides support to the Newfoundland and Labrador Film Development Corporation, the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council, the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, and The Rooms.

Encourage Sports and Recreation: The Department supports active living, sport and recreational development among Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. It supports physical activity among all ages through policy and public education.

Provide leadership for the development of the film and television sectors: The Department works with partners and stakeholders to attract film and video productions which support job creation and economic opportunity across the province.

Primary Clients

The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation primarily serves residents, visitors, and industry stakeholders by supporting tourism development, cultural industries, heritage preservation and presentation, sport and recreational opportunities across Newfoundland and Labrador. Its key clients include tourists, local communities, artists and cultural organizations, tourism operators, and businesses that contribute to or benefit from the province's cultural and recreational sectors. For a complete list of primary clients, please see Annex D.

Vision

Newfoundland and Labrador is a tourism destination of choice offering exceptional visitor experiences; where the province's natural and cultural heritage is protected, the creative industries flourish, and sport and recreation are supported for the benefit of an active population.

Strategic Issue 1: Building a Thriving Tourism Industry

The Department is mandated to market Newfoundland and Labrador as a tourism destination and support tourism market research, product development and competitiveness. Tourism remains a significant economic and social contributor to Newfoundland and Labrador by supporting employment, stimulating local businesses, and showcasing the province's culture, heritage, and natural landscapes. The tourism industry offers meaningful opportunities for rural and remote communities, encourages residents and visitors alike to explore local experiences, attracts major events and contributes to provincial economic diversification. While geopolitical and economic uncertainty is anticipated to impact the tourism industry, a provincial government commitment to complete a new tourism strategy presents an opportunity to enhance the visitor experience, expand target markets, and strengthen the long-term economic and social benefits for Newfoundland and Labrador.

By implementing a new tourism strategy, the Department will advance initiatives to extend the season, strengthen transportation connections, and modernize services to respond to evolving visitor expectations. These efforts will further promote resident "staycation" opportunities, support experience excellence, and leverage data, technology, and stakeholder collaboration to improve competitiveness. During the reporting period, and guided by a new tourism strategy, the Department will implement a sustainable, data-informed approach that supports reliable air access, expands market reach, and deepens stakeholder engagement to position Newfoundland and Labrador as the Tourism Capital of Canada.

Goal:

By March 31, 2029, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will have established a competitive and thriving tourism industry.

Objective 1:

By March 31, 2027, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will have identified opportunities to improve access capacity, extend the tourism season, and strengthen the visitor experience in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Indicators:

- Advance development of a new tourism strategy.
- Identify opportunities to improve access capacity to regional, national and international connections.
- Modernize the visitor services delivery model to meet client demands that integrate community assets with technology and online planning tools.
- Advance opportunities to encourage Newfoundland and Labrador residents to vacation within the province.
- Attract major events to generate positive social, cultural and economic impacts to support the visitor experience.
- Assess annual visitor survey results to identify opportunities and challenges in the visitor experience.

Objective 2

By March 31, 2028, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will have begun implementing initiatives to improve access capacity, extend the tourism season, and strengthen the visitor experience in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Objective 3

By March 31, 2029, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will continue to implement and begin assessing initiatives to improve access capacity, extend the tourism season, and strengthen the visitor experience in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Strategic Issue 2: Strengthening Culture Through Arts and Heritage

The Department is mandated to support the province's arts and culture, protect and preserve its historic resources, and commemorate wartime milestones while honouring the sacrifices of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The province's rich cultural heritage is expressed through its artists and traditions, providing a strong foundation to strengthen a vibrant, inclusive cultural sector where all residents can take pride in and participate. Strengthening the province's culture requires a sustained commitment to initiatives that support creators while expanding cultural access, engagement, and participation across Newfoundland and Labrador.

During the reporting period, the Department will focus on strengthening and expanding stakeholder networks that connect artists, heritage organizations, Indigenous governments and organizations, municipalities, tourism operators, and industry partners while advancing efforts to designate the Heart's Content Transatlantic Cable Station as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Reviewing and modernizing legislative frameworks can remove barriers, encourage innovation, and ensure the long-term protection of heritage resources. Enhanced support mechanisms will build sector capacity which help to ensure arts and culture continue to serve as powerful drivers of community well-being, identity and economic vitality.

Goal:

By March 31, 2029, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will have successfully implemented measures to strengthen culture through arts and heritage.

Objective 1

By March 31, 2027, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will have begun identifying opportunities to strengthen culture through arts and heritage.

Indicators:

- Advanced efforts to designate the Heart's Content Transatlantic Cable Station as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Assessed arts and heritage legislative frameworks.
- Identify and review sectoral support mechanisms.

Objective 2

By March 31, 2028, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will implement measures to strengthen culture through arts and heritage.

Objective 3

By March 31, 2029, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation continue to implement and begin assessing initiatives to strengthen culture through arts and heritage.

Strategic Issue 3: Supporting Active Living Opportunities

The Department is mandated to support sport, recreation and physical activity delivery systems to promote active living for individuals and communities across Newfoundland and Labrador. Active living contributes to improved physical and mental health, reduces chronic disease risk, and strengthens social connections and community well-being for Newfoundland and Labrador residents. During the reporting period, the Department will provide opportunities for active living participation by advancing active living strategies and engaging stakeholders across provincial and community sectors to support the sport and recreation sector. The Department will further engage its federal/provincial/territorial colleagues to advance safe sport standards to address maltreatment in sport such as bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Initiatives will focus on inclusion, equity, and safe participation for residents of all ages and abilities, while building local capacity to provide sustainable programming. Through strategic partnerships and targeted support, the Department will expand opportunities to encourage lifelong active living for all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Goal:

By March 31, 2029, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will have provided new opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador residents to be active.

Objective 1

By March 31, 2027, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will have identified new opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador residents to be active.

Indicators:

- Advanced work to develop active living strategies.
- Supported stakeholder capacity building to provide sport and recreation opportunities.
- Collaborated with federal/provincial/territorial stakeholders to advance safe sport.

Objective 2

By March 31, 2028, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will implement new measures to provide more opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador residents to be active.

Objective 3

By March 31, 2029, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation will continue to implement and begin assessing initiatives to provide more opportunities for Newfoundland and Labrador residents to be active.

Annex A – Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the expressions of desired physical, social, or economic outcomes that would normally require action by, or involvement of, more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by government through platform documents, the Speech from the Throne, mandate letters, annual budget speeches, and policy documents. The **Transparency and Accountability Act** requires departments and public bodies to consider these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans.

The following strategic direction themes were considered, as appropriate and applicable, in the development of the Department's 2026-29 Strategic Plan.

- Building a Showstopping Arts and Tourism Industry
- Rebuilding A Stronger Economy
- Adopt Active Lifestyles

Specific strategic issues identified for the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation are as follows:

- Building a Thriving Tourism Industry
- Strengthening Culture Through Arts and Heritage
- Supporting Active Living Opportunities

Annex B – Reporting Entities

- **C.A. Pippy Park Commission**
- **Marble Mountain Development Corporation**
- **Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council**
- **Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Centre**
- **Heritage Foundation for Newfoundland and Labrador**
- **PictureNL**
- **The Rooms**

Annex C – Departmental Legislation

- **Arts Council Act**
- **Books Preservations of Copies Act**
- **Boxing Authority Act**
- **Cruiseship Authority Act**
- **Grand Concourse Authority Act**
- **Historic Resources Act**
- **Innkeepers Act**
- **Pedestrian Trails Liability Protection Act**
- **Pippy Park Commission Act**
- **Provincial Parks Act**
- **Rooms Act, 2016**
- **Status of the Artist Act**
- **Tourist Accommodations Act**

Annex D – Primary Clients

- Aboriginal Sports and Recreation Circle NL
- Adventure Central Newfoundland
- Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives
- Business and Arts NL
- Canadian Sport Institute Atlantic
- Dance NL
- Destination St. John's
- Destination Labrador
- East Coast Trails Association
- Family History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Go Western Newfoundland
- Hospitality NL
- Kerry County Council (UNESCO Partner)
- Legendary Coasts of Eastern Newfoundland
- Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Music NL
- Newfoundland and Labrador Indigenous Tourism Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Historical Society
- Newfoundland and Labrador Historic Trust
- Parasport NL
- Recreation Newfoundland and Labrador
- School Sports Newfoundland and Labrador
- Sport Newfoundland and Labrador
- Visual Arts Newfoundland and Labrador
- Writers' Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador

