

Strategies FOR Success

Halifax Regional Municipality's Economic Development Strategy 2005-2010



Community Partnership



Creative Community



People

HRM Tax Reform Committee January 3, 2008

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Starting Point

- **A Need to Adopt Regional Economic Policy as Part of Regional Planning**
- **Economic Summit , Nov '04 – Identified Policy Issues, Priorities**
- **Other Sources of Information/Feedback:**
 - Consultations With Organizations Concerned With Economic Development
 - Web-based Leadership Survey
 - Interviews With 800+ Businesses
- **Served as a Basis for Strategy Development**
- **Work Directed by a Community-Based Economic Strategy Advisory Committee**
- **Work Plan, Work Groups to Develop Strategy Over 2005**
- **Adopted by Halifax Regional Council – November, 2005**



Strategy Goals, Focus Areas

94 Actions, Including 11 Priorities Within 5 Strategic Focus Areas:

- **Supercharge Our Labour Force:**
 - Anticipate, Respond to Labour Supply, Training Needs
- **Leverage Our Creative Community To Encourage Growth:**
 - Enhance HRM's Social, Cultural Persona Through Investment
- **Build Awareness of Our Assets And Capitalize On Our Reputation:**
 - Promote Regional Advantages – Creative People, Educated Work Force, Lifestyle, Natural Setting, Culture & Heritage
- **Turn Rivalries Into Partnerships:**
 - Encourage Partners to Work in Sync to Drive Our Economy
- **Create A Gung-Ho Business Climate:**
 - Improve Investment Environment by Reviewing, Benchmarking Taxes, Regulations Against Competing Jurisdictions

Our Vision

Our people are our community. We will improve and empower the lives of every citizen by building a prosperous, dynamic, globally competitive economy where creativity and risk-taking can flourish alongside a quality of life that's the envy of anywhere in the country.

Labour Force – Priority Actions

- **Immigration – Target & Attract New Immigrants:**

- Regional Immigration Strategy, HRM Action Plan
- Leadership Council, Welcoming Communities

- **Develop, Promote Business Case to Retain, Expand & Attract DND Facilities & Other Federal Offices**

- Engaged DND, OED, HRM, ACOA, CLC Re: Shearwater
- Business Case for Standing Contingency Task Force

Leverage Our Creative Community - Priority Actions

•Establish New & Enhanced Maintenance Initiatives & Standards With A Focus On Year-round, 24/7 Accessibility:

- Graffiti Abatement Initiative, Urban Design Standards, etc
- Focus on Hot Spots (i.e. “Pizza Corner”) re: Clean & Safe
- Work with Store, Business Owners to Establish Maintenance Standards, Encourage Stewardship and Responsibility

•Build Support For, & Work To Fast Track Social Investment Projects That Are Already Well Advanced:

- Facilitate Development of Seawall, Queen’s Wharf, etc.
- Implement Recommendations of HRM’s Cultural Plan
- Develop a Creative Community Strategy to Attract, Retain Creative People

Awareness/Capitalizing on Our Reputation – Priority Actions

Develop A “Quality Of Place Council” To Review Existing Brand Equity In HRM & Develop A Multi-partner Approach To Marketing HRM:

–Develop More Coordinated Approach to Marketing/Branding HRM

Turning Rivalries Into Partnerships – Priority Actions

•**Support Rural Economic Development:**

- Partner With Business, CED Organizations in Support of Rural Development
- Encourage, Support Individuals Establishing, Maintaining Businesses in Rural Areas
- Assist Businesses in Rural Areas With Succession Planning

•**Create Alignment Of Strategic Intent:**

- Work With Partners to Identify Common Values, Vision Around Growth
- Develop a Government Relations Plan
- Create Alignment and “Rules of Engagement” Around Vision

•**Develop the Halifax Gateway:**

- Work With Gateway Partners to Develop HRM as East Coast Logistics Hub
- Work to Reduce Congestion on Land Side Movement of Container Traffic

Create a Gung-Ho Business Climate – Priority Actions

- **Benchmark Tax, Regulation, Permit Approvals Against Competing Cities:**
 - Continuous Improvement re: Turnaround Times, Clear Policy, Regulations, Tax Reform
- **Bring Infrastructure Spending Up To Appropriate Comparable Levels:**
 - Continue Work to Address Deficiencies Re: Infrastructure
 - Seek Alternative Ways to Fund and Close Annual Infrastructure Gap
- **Inform And Educate HRM Business About Exporting:**
 - Work with Partners to Develop a Trade/Export Strategy
 - Build on Existing Strengths in Education, Software, Financial Services, Logistics, etc.

Implementation Principles

- **No New Bureaucracy**
- **Make Use of Existing Structures**
- **Eliminate Duplication**
- **Develop Networks and Partnerships**
- **Build on Public Private Approach**



Progress of Implementation

- **Merger of EDO's Complete**
 - Supports Alignment Around Strategy
- **Fully Mandated Board of Directors**
 - Bridges Community and Business Interests
- **New Service Agreement**
 - Clear Accountability Re: Strategy Implementation
- **Integration Of Management Teams**
 - Now Clearly on the "Same Team"
- **Economic Strategy Committee is "Champion"**
 - As per Intent of Council and Economic Strategy
- **Chamber of Commerce Tracks Success Against Strategy**
 - 2nd Annual Scorecard Due in February

2nd Year Progress Report

- **All Of The 11 Priorities Are Tracking Towards**
- **3 Priorities (Benchmarking Tax/Approvals; Social Investment; Infrastructure Spending) Are Making Good Progress After a Slow Start**
- **Quality Of Place Council Now In Place Will Help To Advance This Priority**

Implementation Gaps

- **Outcomes Related To Population Growth, University Enrolment And Federal Government Employment Are Tracking Below Targets**
- **The Quality Of Place Council Has Been Slow To Develop Because Of Merger Issues And Financial Constraints**

New Challenges

- **Intense Competition For Young Professionals And Skilled Trades**
- **Port Of Halifax Losing Market Share, Even As Competition For Asian Traffic Intensifies**
- **Merger Of Economic Development Organizations Has Delayed Some Elements Of Strategy Implementation**
- **Need for Development Initiatives In African Nova Scotia Communities to Grow Potential**
- **Attitudes Towards Growth Aren't Well Understood And Have Emerged As A Constraint To The Growth Process**
- **Federal Employment Has Begun To Decline**
- **Current Immigration Controversy May Harm Attraction Of Immigrants**
- **Gateway Infrastructure And Marketing Issues Identified As Key Development Factor**
- **High Income Opportunities In Financial Services Have Developed As Expected. Lack Of Premium Office Space In Downtown Has Emerged As A Constraint To Success**

Tie-in With Tax Reform

- **Maintain Competitive Advantage, Ensure Fair & Reasonable Taxes**
- **Advance Efforts To Benchmark Tax Levels, Incentives & Approvals So HRM Is Widely Viewed As An Attractive Place For Business**
- **Ensure Tax Policies And Regulations Support Economic Drivers**
- **Set Investment Priorities, Including Community Infrastructure Investment**
- **Maximize Leveraging Opportunities Of Operating And Capital Budgets**
- **Develop A Business Toolkit That Includes Info On Tax Rates**
- **Work To Review Innovative Options For Office Space Development In Central Business District**
- **Develop Incentives To Attract, Retain Businesses, Immigrants, Young Professionals**