



**HALIFAX REGION  
IMMIGRATION STRATEGY**

**Business Case &  
Strategic Action Plan**

**Volume 1 of 2**

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July 27, 2005

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the support of the members of the Steering Committee –

Colin Sun, Atlantic Canada Opportunity Agency; Ron Heisler, Citizenship and Immigration Canada; Elizabeth Mills, Nova Scotia Office of Immigration; Jennifer Church, Halifax Regional Municipality; Stephen Dempsey and Ruth Blades, the Greater Halifax Partnership; and Graziella Grbac, Halifax Regional Development Authority.

This study would not have been possible without your expert advice and support.

We would also like to acknowledge the financial support for this project received through ACOA, CIC and the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration.

Nearly 80 individuals participated in interviews and focus groups. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and enthusiasm for this subject matter.

The advice and participation of the members of the Advisory Committee was particularly helpful and for that we would like to extend a special thank you.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION – THE IMMIGRATION RATIONALE

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### 1.1 Immigration to Halifax Region – The Overall Context

- Halifax is Atlantic Canada's economic engine, generating 45% of Nova Scotia's GDP and 15% of GDP for all of Atlantic Canada. Halifax, and the Halifax economy have been growing steadily and consistently over the past decade, a period during which the unemployment rate for the area has never exceeded the national average.

*Yet, demographic trends, already evident elsewhere in Atlantic Canada, will present increasing threats to this level of performance. A weakened economic engine in Halifax will create significant problems for not only the residents of Halifax, but also for Nova Scotians and all Atlantic Canadians.*

Halifax is home to almost 40% of Nova Scotia's residents and more than 15% of Atlantic Canadians, (with more than half the population currently under 45 years of age). Halifax is also Canada's Smart City, with 63% of the working-age population having a university or community college education, and almost 25% of the city's labour force has a university degree. There are also six degree-granting institutions located in Halifax. Together, these institutions enrol more than 30,000 students.

However, with the number of high school graduates projected to decline by more than 20% from current levels within the next ten years, the supply of young people available within Atlantic Canada to migrate to Halifax to attend post-secondary education institutions and to work can be expected to decline significantly. Universities in Halifax are already experiencing declining enrolment growth and even actual declines in new enrolments.

*The imminent slowdown in population growth and intra-regional migration within Atlantic Canada will almost certainly be exacerbated by competition for students and young people from post-secondary institutions and communities elsewhere in Canada that are facing similar demographic challenges.*

- As identified by Richard Florida and others, diversity is an essential component of a growing and vibrant economy. And, communities with vibrant, growing economies attract young, creative people and, more importantly, the companies that look to that talent as the basis for future growth and profitability.

*With only 7% of our population being foreign-born, Halifax is anything but diverse. Left to continue, that lack of diversity will increasingly constrain our ability to attract to our region the young, creative people we will need to fuel the performance of Halifax as Atlantic Canada's economic engine.*

- The population of Nova Scotia is barely growing and, indeed, in two recent years has actually declined. The population of Nova Scotia is also aging rapidly — within 20 years, current demographic projections indicate that virtually 40% of Nova Scotia's population will be age 55 or older. Halifax has been perhaps somewhat insulated from the severity of these demographic trends due to its ability to attract young people within Atlantic Canada.

*However, without explicit action to change these demographic realities, Halifax will soon face a shrinking workforce, a smaller business-economic base, and a declining tax base. Such a development would have significant economic impact on the rest of Nova Scotia, and on all of Atlantic Canada.*

These points speak to a need to look outside the region, and indeed outside Canada for newcomers who might view Halifax as an attractive location in which to settle and build a future for themselves and their families. The Government of Nova Scotia has recognised these realities and has established, within the context of Federal legislation, a solid framework strategy through which increased numbers of immigrants can be attracted to and settle in Nova Scotia.

There is also the temptation in considering these demographic and economic realities to see increased immigration to Halifax, to Nova Scotia and to Atlantic Canada as a panacea, as the proverbial 'silver bullet' which will reverse the impending demographic and economic decline.

However, the reality is quite different, and significantly more complex.

Immigration is only one element of a complex set of economic development strategies that:

- Work to attract businesses and investment from elsewhere in Canada as well as from around the world;
- Create an environment in which businesses and organizations already operating here, (including our universities and other post-secondary institutions), can grow and prosper; and
- Foster a wide understanding of the community capacities, human resource skills and capabilities that will be needed to support effective implementation of these strategies.

The immigration strategy for Halifax region presented in this plan has been designed to complement the Federal-Provincial statutory and strategic framework, as well as to enhance the wider set of economic development strategies being pursued and implemented by a number of Federal, Provincial and Municipal agencies. These include the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP), the proponent of this strategy development project.

One of the key philosophical underpinnings of the strategy presented in this plan is that by creating the reality that there is much interesting, innovative, and creative activity happening in Halifax, our city will be seen and become known as a desirable place to be, to work and to live. By creating what is seen to be an active, vibrant community we will become a destination of choice for immigrants as well as for returning Nova Scotians and Canadians from the Atlantic and other Provinces.

There are three key foundation elements in the proposed Halifax region immigration strategy –

- First – build on the foundation elements of Federal legislation and Nova Scotia's Immigration Strategy;
- Second – concentrate on more fully integrating into our community those immigrants already living in Halifax region so they remain here with opportunities for future growth; and, then,
- Third – work with our Francophone and international communities to identify and attract to Halifax immigrants who will be able to integrate quickly and effectively into productive effective lives in Halifax.

Over time, this strategic approach has the potential to transform Halifax into the world's most cosmopolitan small city.

## **1.2 The 'Business Case' For Increased Immigration To Halifax**

### ***The Challenge – An Aging Workforce / Population Coupled With Out-Migration***

The July 2002 Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC) Report Card identified several key demographic shifts in the population base of Nova Scotia and of the Halifax region:

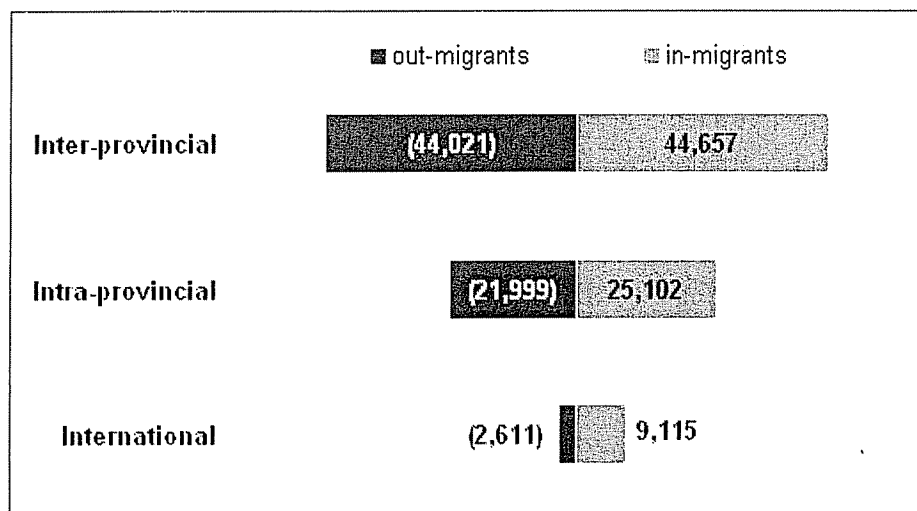
- Slower population growth and an aging population will erode the expansion of the labour force and the associated tax base.
- The total number of children (age 0-14) in the Atlantic Provinces will continue to decline, dropping by about 30% between 2001 and 2026.
- The number of people 65 and over will nearly double and be almost twice as large as the number of children.

Nova Scotia provincial statistics and Census data also confirm that these trends are evident in Halifax:

- The number of pre-school age children in Halifax declined by almost 16% from 1991-2001.

- During the same period, the population between the ages of 15 and 34 declined by 16.6%, while the number of seniors (aged 65 years and older), increased by almost 25%.
- Overall, during that ten year period, the Halifax population under the age of 35 decreased by more than 8%, while the population aged 35 and older increased by 30%.
- In 2004, people aged 45 years of age or older constituted 34% of the workforce, up from 18% in 1987.
- Between 1997 and 2002 it is estimated that 78,874 individuals migrated to Halifax –
  - 11.5% were international migrants from outside of Canada
  - 69,759 were internal migrants – we estimate that about 30% originated from other Provinces within Atlantic Canada, about 34% from other parts of Canada, and the remaining 36% coming from other parts of Nova Scotia.
  - At the same time, there was significant out-migration from our region –
  - Over 44,000 people left Halifax for other provinces, and an additional 22,000 moved to other parts of Nova Scotia.

***Migration Estimates by Type, Halifax, 1997 - 2002***

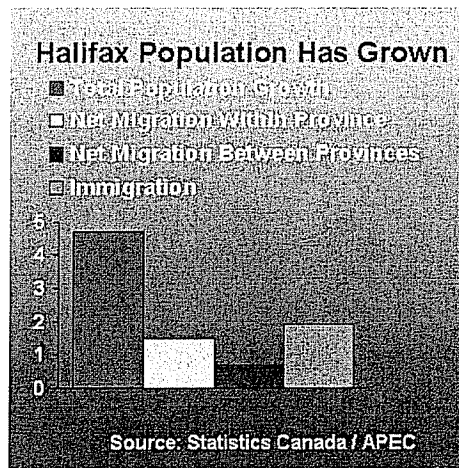


*Source: Nova Scotia Statistical Review*

This migration activity has resulted in growth of the Halifax population by 4.7% from 1996 – 2001, (the most recent period for which Census data is available).

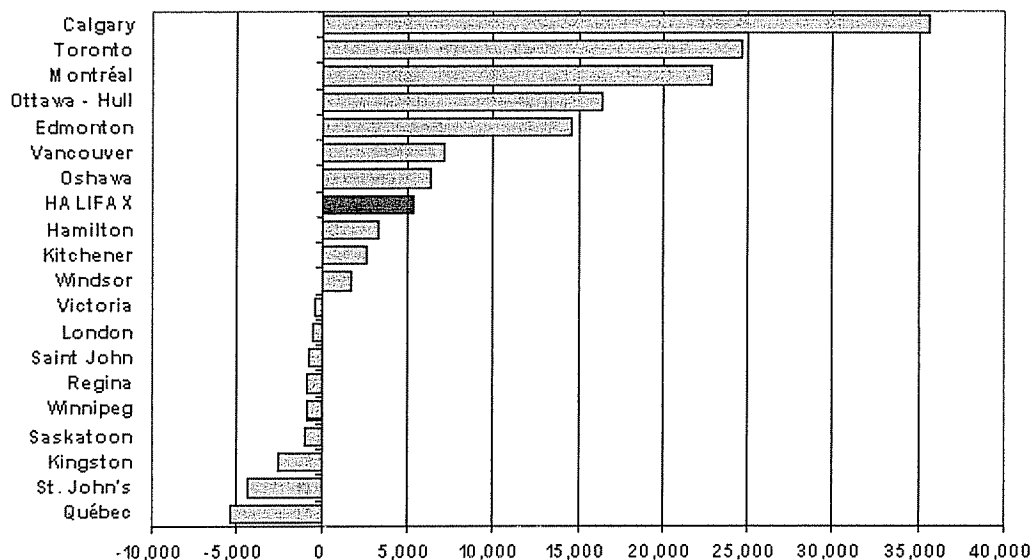
As the data illustrate, net migration within Nova Scotia and from other Provinces represents a significant portion of the region's population growth during that period.

### Population Growth, Halifax, 1996 - 2001



Other data shows that young people constitute a significant part of that intra and inter-Provincial migration. As shown below, in the last census period Halifax gained youth, primarily due to in-migration to enrol in post-secondary education.

### Net Youth Migration (Aged 20 – 34), 1996 - 2004



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census



While the data show that Halifax has experienced net gains in youth population, the movement of young people into and out of the community is significant —

- Almost 5,000 people aged 20 – 34 arrived in Halifax annually during the 1996 – 2001 census period, while almost 4,000 left each year.
- Our six universities and the three campuses of the Nova Scotia Community College are obviously an important attraction, as is the potential for employment after graduation.
- We estimate that nearly two thirds of these new arrivals come from other communities within Nova Scotia and the rest of Atlantic Canada.
- We also know from data published by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission that over the next ten years, the number of students graduating from high schools in Atlantic Canada will decline by more than 20%.

Thus, an important contributing component to the net migration gains Halifax has experienced in its youth population and to the region's overall population growth is unlikely to continue.

### ***The Impacts – Weakening Public Finances, Declining Diversity & Increased Workforce Shortages***

The impacts of these population changes on the fiscal position of the Province will be significant. As stated in “A Framework for Immigration”, Aug. 2004, Province of Nova Scotia:

- An ageing population will increase the demand for publicly funded services such as health care, putting an upward pressure on expenditures, and at the same time generate lower incomes and spend less money, thereby reducing tax revenues.
- Population declines also lead to declining levels of federal transfer payments to provinces. Recently, Nova Scotia was obliged to repay \$170 million in equalization payments and \$23 million in Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST) received between 2000-01 and 2003-04, when the Census reported a decrease in Nova Scotia's population and its share of the Canadian population.

An ageing, declining population will result in a decreasing tax base at the municipal level as well.

Halifax region is already in the early stages of workforce shortages. In a presentation to the Atlantic Immigration Conference in May 2005, APEC President Elizabeth Beale noted that employers in Halifax are already reporting difficulties hiring young workers.

A walk through downtown Halifax or any shopping mall in the region will reveal a proliferation of 'help wanted' signs. This phenomenon provides clear demonstration that in the retail and food service sectors, traditional entry points to the Canadian workforce, a shortage of available workers is already evident. Those entry-level shortages can be expected to migrate upward through higher skill level occupations and into other sectors quite rapidly.

When an adequate workforce is not available, the business community is directly affected, and the community as a whole is less well served:

- There is a reduction in services from both private and public sector organizations. This has recently been experienced in the health sector when shortages of anaesthetists necessitated surgery postponements, and can be experienced on a daily basis in Halifax by any homeowner seeking a renovation contractor or electrician or plumber to undertake repair or maintenance work.
- Organizations are forced to bring skilled labour in from outside the region incurring higher costs. Several area manufacturers have found it necessary to launch international recruitment campaigns to meet specific requirements for skilled workers.
- A lack of skilled workers can result in foregone revenue, as orders cannot be accepted, thereby constraining growth of the affected company and of the economy.

Halifax employers are not currently experiencing dramatic skills shortages, except in a small number of occupations.

- Only one quarter of firms in the region feel there are specific occupations for which the age of their workforce is becoming a problem, though more recognise they will face this challenge in the relatively near future.
- Some do report experiencing skill shortages now, as they are currently having difficulty finding particular skill sets and are noticing the affects of an aging workforce.

Greater Halifax Partnership *SmartBusiness* data shows that the occupations that will be recruited most actively over the next twelve months are: salespersons/business development; computer programmers/IT specialist; medical lab technicians; physicians; and engineers.

### **Increasing Occupations Over the Next 12 Months by Major NOC**

Top Level NOC	% of new jobs
0 – Management Occupations	5
1 – Business, Finance & Admin	4
2 – Natural & Applied Sciences	21
3 – Health Occupations	7
4 – Social Science, Education, Government Services & Religion	6
5 – Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	4
6 – Sales & Service Occupations	35
7 – Trades, Transport & Equipment Operators	12
8 – Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	0
9 – Occupations unique to Processing & Manufacturing	6

Source: Greater Halifax Partnership, SmartBusiness

Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) data also demonstrates that jobs requiring university degrees will show the highest growth rate, at 6.5%, while jobs requiring college or apprenticeship will grow by 4.2%. As well, the outlook for persons with intermediate skills across all occupations is expected to be good, as 35% of all jobs growth will be at that skill level. In addition -

- Professional positions are expected to account for 22% of new employment, while technical, para-professional and skilled positions will make up 27%.
- There will be little growth in labouring and unskilled positions, with only 6% of new jobs for that segment of the workforce.
- Management positions will make up the remaining 9% of new jobs in Nova Scotia.

Another characteristic of our community and workforce is its lack of diversity. This is significant because:

- Diversity brings increased levels of innovation, productivity, and creativity.
- Innovation and economic growth are linked both to attraction and retention of well-educated people and the international diversity of the workforce — diverse communities are magnets for young, creative people.
- High technology and other knowledge intensive companies are attracted to diverse communities where such young workers are located.

By taking action to increase the diversity of our community, Halifax can accelerate its economic growth.

## ***The Opportunity – Increased International Immigration***

Natural population growth and traditional intra-provincial and intra-regional migration can no longer be relied upon as major sources of newcomers to Halifax region. A strategy to attract, integrate and retain international immigrants in much larger numbers than has been the case in recent years is essential to continuation of Halifax's role as the economic engine of Nova Scotia and of Atlantic Canada.

Increased international immigration can create significant benefits for Halifax and its communities and businesses:

- Most immigrants are between the ages of 25 and 45, the age group in which we most need newcomers.
- Primary applicant immigrants are usually accompanied by a spouse and 2 or 3 children, which helps to address the declines in pre-school and school-aged children in Halifax.
- Most immigrants are highly educated, with good English language skills, at least one other language and, in many cases fluency in three or four languages.
- Immigrants bring knowledge of international markets which can help Halifax companies gain access to export markets.
- Immigrants generally demonstrate a very strong work ethic, often stronger than exhibited by the general population.
- Immigrants bring new ideas and new ways of looking at problems.
- Immigrants want to fit into our communities and workplaces and will often make great efforts to do so, resulting in greater workplace productivity, (as identified by such local employers as Helly Hanson and CGI), and greater community contribution.
- Immigrants increase our community's diversity - a key to a vibrant community that will be sufficient to provide social stimulus and economic fulfilment for our region.
- If incremental targets for increased international immigration to Halifax region are achieved, we estimate the cumulative direct economic impact over five years will be more than \$366 million. At that level of immigration activity – 2,800 immigrants arriving annually, with 70% remaining in Halifax -- annual incremental increases in direct economic activity will amount to more than \$122 million.

## ***The Conclusion***

By taking steps now to improve the attraction, integration and retention of international immigrants in Halifax, we will be building the foundation for continued economic growth and a very bright future for our region.

However, without action now —

- Employers in Halifax will face impending skill shortages, which, if left unmet, will lead to worsening economic prospects;
- School enrolments and graduations will continue already evident trends towards decline, resulting in fewer students for our post-secondary education institutions and fewer workers for local employers;
- The trend towards an ageing population will continue to accelerate, resulting in worsening financial pressures on all levels of government;
- The diversity of our community will not improve, indeed will likely worsen, making it even more difficult to attract to Halifax creative young workers and the companies which follow them and seek them out as potential employees; and, inevitably,
- Our community and region will slide into long term economic decline, resulting in diminishing economic prospects for us all.

## **1.3 Project Purpose and Objectives**

The overall purpose of this project is to develop a practical, workable action plan to attract, integrate and retain immigrants in the Halifax region. The strategic action plan will serve as a roadmap for successful implementation of —

- An approach to attract 2,800 new immigrants per year with a target retention rate of 70% within four years of full strategy implementation;
- A community partnership model consisting of business, government, economic development, community and settlement-providing organizations to move the immigration agenda forward; and
- A logical approach to address immediate short-term actions, as well as medium and long-term initiatives.

## ***Approach and Methodology***

The research approach recognizes as a starting point that a significant number of stakeholders have interests in the successful implementation of this strategy. Therefore, the process began with development of a comprehensive understanding of all stakeholder relationships

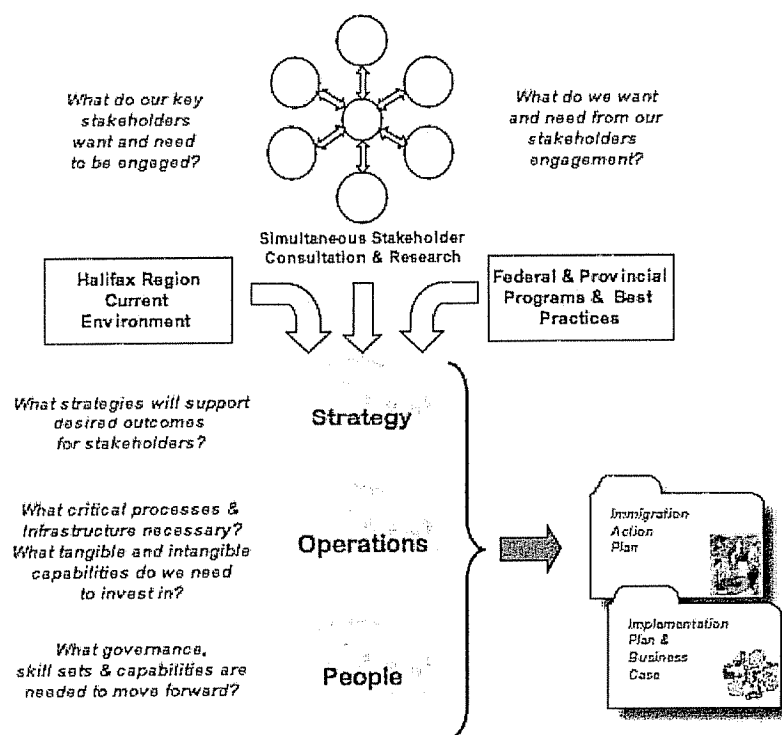
involved. This understanding is the foundation from which we built a set of related strategies that collectively address all prioritised stakeholder requirements, leading to effective action and implementation plans.

As illustrated in the overview schematic below, our examination of stakeholder relationships was carried out simultaneously with research into the following three areas of study –

- The Halifax region’s current environment with respect to its readiness to embrace immigration;
- The Federal and Provincial immigration programs and directions; and
- Effective attraction and retention practices used in other jurisdictions, both within Canada and internationally.

The findings from the stakeholder consultations and research come together in a set of strategies to satisfy the widest possible set of prioritised stakeholder expectations. To ensure the Halifax region has the capacity to achieve its strategic objectives, this approach aligns the strategies with the operational and related capacities, and the people and related capabilities required to support effective its implementation.

### *Planning Overview*



## **2. STRATEGIES, TACTICS & ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE IMMIGRATION TARGETS**

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### **Overview**

The design of this strategic action plan is based on the following premises –

- There is an impressive array of immigration related services and resources currently available to newcomers to the Halifax region. However, often these services are unable to meet the demand either due to inadequate resources or in some cases, services or information are simply not available currently.
- The effectiveness of existing information, resources and services will benefit from an overall coordinated approach to optimize efficiency and cost effectiveness.
- Communication, education and awareness of immigration services and processes targeted at immigrants, potential immigrants, and residents of Halifax region require a coordinated message and delivery approach.

Therefore, the strategic action plan is designed as a capacity building tool to assist a community-based partnership in enhancing the existing immigration related infrastructure to attract, integrate and retain immigrants in the Halifax region.

The implementation plan has been developed for a two (2) year period. While demographic and labour force issues are not critical at the moment, initiating a coordinated and focused approach to immigration now will provide time to establish an adequate infrastructure to meet the strategy objectives.

The three (3) strategies are –

1. Create a public / private / community leadership entity with a mandate to direct the immigration agenda for the Halifax region to achieve the targeted outcomes;
2. More fully integrate immigrants already living in Halifax region by strengthening available services and support systems; and creating a welcoming community; and
3. Attract immigrants who are likely to stay because they have or have the ability to build sustainable employment, business, professional, cultural, faith or community relationships in Halifax.

## **Guiding Principles**

The guiding principle in implementing the strategic action plan is to create a common community approach consistent with and in support of the Provincial strategy and within the Federal immigration legislation. The plan advocates a collaborative approach to coordinating the collective efforts of existing and new programs, services, information and communication by –

- Adding capacity building capability where there are existing gaps;
- Building on existing strengths and infrastructure;
- Supporting new services and resource requirements as appropriate;
- Coordinating and facilitating a consistent and focused approach;
- Developing and delivering programs or services only where there is an identified gap and no other organization has the resources or the mandate to fulfil the need; and
- Identifying and pursuing non-traditional funding sources.



## 2.1 Strategy # 1 – Leadership and Infrastructure

### **Strategy Definition & Description**

*Create a public / private / community leadership entity with a mandate to direct the immigration agenda for the Halifax region to achieve the targeted outcomes*

The strategy is dependent on the primary capabilities of a strong public / private / community leadership and coordination body with responsibility for development of the immigration infrastructure and delivery of the strategy objectives. The role of the leadership council would include –

- Direction and guidance of strategy implementation;
- Identifying funding sources and securing appropriate funding;
- Recruiting necessary resources to deliver overall implementation; and
- Developing and delivering a communications and marketing plan.

There are about 75 to 80 organizations in Halifax involved in some way in immigration and multiculturalism. These include settlement, business and labour organizations; universities and colleges; ethno-cultural communities and their related foreign government representatives; and three levels of government, including multiple departments within each level. In addition, there are numerous faith communities who support their newcomers in a variety of ways. In order to address the many facets of immigration, a strong cohesive team of representatives from these various organizations must be empowered to develop and set the agenda to meet the identified targets.

### **Key Structures & Characteristics**

In reviewing the available services, initiatives and activities currently underway, and those which will require attention in the short term, the areas of focus include the following –

- Involving the community in welcoming newcomers and embracing diversity in our neighbourhoods, communities, workplaces and schools;
- Engaging participants in Nova Scotia's trade missions as "immigration ambassadors" and leveraging existing international relationships; educating Canadian embassy staff and international agents around the world about Halifax's interest in attracting immigrants; and providing immigration application support to international students and others who are here on visitors or temporary work visas;
- Enhancing newcomer settlement and integration through increased specialized language resources in the workplace; additional social and

cultural supports; and employment and business related information and guidance.

The table below provides an overview of the areas in which the various organizations involved in immigration operate in the three primary areas of focus.

**Organizations Involved in Immigration**

ORGANIZATIONS	Community Engagement		Attraction			Newcomer Integration		
	Business / Workplace	Community / Schools	Trade Missions / International Relationships	Embassy Staff / International Agents	Immigrant Application Support	Language	Social / Cultural / Legal	Employment / Business
<b>Settlement, Awareness &amp; Education</b>								
<b>MISA</b>	•	•			•	•	•	•
Centre for Diverse Visible Cultures						•	•	
YMCA Newcomer Centre		•				•	•	
Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre		•				•	•	•
Halifax Regional School Board		•				•	•	
Metro-Region Immigrant Language Services		•				•	•	
Nova Scotia Community College						•		
ESL ( <i>English for Academic Purposes</i> )						•		
Private Schools						•		
Halifax Regional Libraries		•				•	•	
Pier 21	•	•						•
Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia (MANS)		•					•	
Halifax Refugee Clinic						•	•	
Cultural Health Information & Interpreting Service						•		
<b>Business &amp; Labour</b>								
<b>Greater Halifax Partnership</b>	•		•	•	•			•
<b>Halifax Regional Development Authority</b>	•	•			•		•	•
<b>Halifax Chamber of Commerce</b>	•		•					•
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters	•		•					•
<b>Black Business Initiative</b>	•		•				•	•
NovaKnowledge	•							
Labour	•							•

ORGANIZATIONS	Community Engagement		Attraction			Newcomer Integration		
	Business / Workplace	Community / Schools	Trade Missions / International Relationships	Embassy Staff / International Agents	Immigrant Application Support	Language	Social / Cultural / Legal	Employment / Business
<b>Post Secondary</b>								
<b>Universities</b>	•		•		•		•	•
Nova Scotia Community College	•		•					•
EduNova			•	•				
Atlantic Metropolis ( <i>Research Only</i> )	•	•				•	•	•
<b>Ethno-Cultural</b>								
<b>Ethno-Cultural Communities</b>	•	•	•				•	•
Foreign Government Representatives		•	•		•			
<b>Conseil communautaire du Grand-Havre</b>	•	•				•	•	•
Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse			•	•				
<b>Government</b>								
<b>Municipal</b>	•	•					•	•
<b>Provincial</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
<b>Federal</b>	•		•	•	•	•	•	•

### Governance Structure

Organizations with the collective capacity and capability to address the leadership requirements of this strategy include –

- MISA
- Greater Halifax Partnership
- Halifax Regional Development Authority
- Halifax Chamber of Commerce
- Black Business Initiative
- Labour
- Post Secondary Education
- Ethno-cultural Communities (represented through MANS)
- Conseil communautaire du Grand-Havre, and
- All three levels of Government.

Representatives from these organizations should form a leadership council and the following governance structure should be established as soon as possible to maintain momentum –

- MISA and the Greater Halifax Partnership should act as co-chairs;
- An operating executive should be selected from within this group based on the principles outlined in the table below;
- The leadership organizations should nominate the most appropriate person from within their organizations to participate in this council; and
- All other organizations (identified in the ‘Organizations involved in Immigration’ table) are important partners and their continuing involvement in working groups and as subject matter experts will be necessary to move the agenda forward.

The suggested name for this organizational entity is the Halifax Regional Immigration Partnership (HRIP).

## Operational Capacity Requirements

An effective governance structure and supporting tools are necessary to move the strategy forward. The following table describes the three (3) foundational elements which are needed to support the strategy roll out.

Requirement	Description
<b>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</b>	<p>The MOU should –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the governance structure;</li> <li>• Identify the Stakeholder organizations;</li> <li>• Describe the outcomes to be achieved;</li> <li>• Define structure and accountabilities;</li> <li>• Describe roles and responsibilities;</li> <li>• Define decision-making authority and related processes;</li> <li>• Set out meeting frequency and purpose of meetings; and</li> <li>• Describe guiding principles for selecting an operating executive such as – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The executive should be reflective of the objectives and have appropriate authority to facilitate efficient and timely decision-making;</li> <li>○ The organizations the executive represent must have the capacity to secure funding to support this initiative; and</li> <li>○ The individual(s) must have the passion and the commitment to engage the community.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Implementation Plan</b>	<p>The implementation plan is the roadmap to allow the strategy to achieve its short and long-term objectives. It must be managed and maintained by a dedicated project manager and team and supported by the Leadership Council.</p>
<b>Communication - Community Relations / Marketing Plan</b>	<p>Like the implementation plan, the communications plan is a key community capacity building tool. Because there is a need to deliver a consistent message and facilitate communication across a broad spectrum of participants, stakeholders and the public, this plan will require significant support and input from the Leadership Council.</p>

Requirement	Description
<b>Immigration Scorecard</b>	<p>The immigration scorecard (modelled after the Balanced Scorecard) should be developed to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assist with achieving alignment across the broad spectrum of immigration services, programs and initiatives;</li> <li>• Measure input and output;</li> <li>• Identify success indicators; and</li> <li>• Assign specific accountabilities.</li> </ul>

## ***People — Leadership & Human Resource Capability Requirements***

Participation from the following groups in the identified roles will provide the necessary leadership, planning, communication and execution support to roll out the strategy action plan.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Council and Operating Executive</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation and Communication Planning and Execution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Team</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation / Execution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working Groups</li> </ul>
<b>Communications &amp; Marketing Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor and Council</li> <li>• Immigration Champions</li> </ul>

### ***Governance - Leadership Council***

The Leadership Council with its operating executive group is the driver of the strategy. Its mandate is to provide direction and guidance and to render decisions as appropriate to ensure the strategy stays on track and meets its objectives. Where possible, participants should be prepared to commit resources from their own organizations to this initiative in addition to their own time.

The role of the government representatives includes the following –

- **Municipal, Provincial and Federal Governments**

Participation of provincial and federal government representatives is important given their roles as funders of immigration services and administrators of the legislation. The logical representatives are the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration and Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

This strategy suggests that government representatives participate as ex-officio members of the council, acting in an advisory and consultative capacity. This arms length approach also allows the other team members to promote changes to legislation, policy, agreements, funding, etc.

- **Halifax Regional Municipality**

Like the Provincial and Federal governments, the role of HRM as the local government body should be as an ex-officio member of the Leadership Council.

## ***Implementation and Communication Planning and Execution***

### **Project Team**

This action plan should be set up as a project, initially for a two year period at which time it should be reviewed to determine the next most appropriate iteration in the environment at that time. Accordingly, it should be headed up by a Project Director and supported by a team of 4 to 5 FTE's with the following capabilities:

- Planning and project control;
- Communications and marketing;
- Education, community relations and support for working groups;
- Volunteer support; and
- Organization and administration.

### **Working Groups**

Based on the implementation plan, working groups should be struck as necessary to deliver specific and focused elements of the plan. Working groups should be lead by a member of the Leadership Council and participants in working groups can be recruited from a variety of organizations –

- Organizations represented within the Leadership Council;
- Other organizations included in the table entitled 'Organizations involved in Immigration' found earlier in this chapter;
- Private sector business and professional organizations; and / or
- Community based organizations interested in participating in some aspect of the immigration strategy.

## ***Immigration Champions***

### **The Mayor and HRM Councillors**

On May 10th, 2005, Council adopted the following vision –

*"Halifax Regional Municipality is a welcoming community where immigration is supported and encouraged. Halifax Regional Municipality will work with other levels of government and community partners to increase our collective cultural, social and economic diversity by welcoming immigrants to our community."*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Council Submission of May 4, 2005 submitted by Dan English, Acting Chief Administrative Officer – Subject: Immigration in HRM



To ensure the immigration message is carried throughout the community, the Mayor and the Councillors should be provided with necessary speaking and collateral materials and should be encouraged to champion immigration within their respective districts whenever possible.

### **Business, Labour and Community Champions**

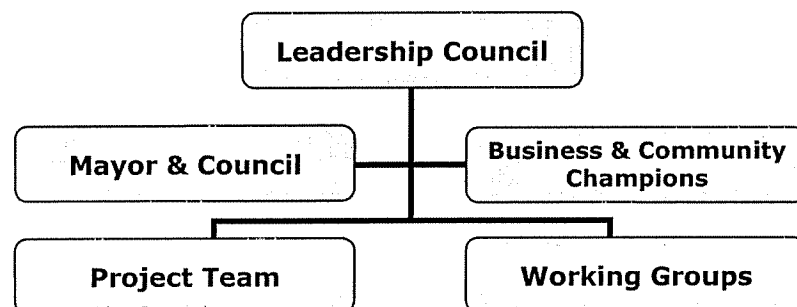
These Champions are the face of the immigration initiative in Halifax. Their role is primarily one of marketing and education. They should be individuals with high profiles in the community and most importantly, they must be passionate about the issue. Selection of these individuals could be through a public expression of interest process to ensure that successful candidates are truly passionate about the issues and representative of their respective communities.

Initially this should be a small group to assist in defining the role specifically and becoming the familiar faces of immigration to Halifax residents. The Champions should be representative of the following groups with attention to appropriate gender and urban / rural balance, achieved by including –

- Recent immigrant;
- Business leader who is an immigrant;
- Business leader who has hired immigrants but is not him/herself an immigrant;
- Youth leader who is an immigrant;
- Community leader; and
- Labour leader.

In addition, the College of Physicians and Surgeons could be recruited as a Champion professional association based on their recently announced Clinician Assessment for Practice Program (CAPP) which assesses the skills and knowledge of internationally trained physicians who wish to be licensed in Nova Scotia.

### **Halifax Region Immigration Partnership – Structure**



### ***Specific Implementation Tactics***

These tasks and activities are not intended to be carried out in a linear approach. The implementation plan, found later in the report, provides a high level timetable.

<b>Tasks / Activities</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
1. Seek HRM Council Support for the Strategic Action Plan	Co-chairs
2. Engage the Mayor and Council as Champions	Co-chairs
3. Form the Leadership Council	Co-chairs
4. Select Operating Executive	Leadership Council
5. Draft Memorandum of Understanding	Operating Executive
6. Approve Memorandum of Understanding	Leadership Council
7. Select Project Director	Leadership Council
8. Identify and Secure Funders / Funding Proposal	Leadership Council / Project Director
9. Recruit Project Team	Project Director
10. Modify Implementation Plan	Project Director / Team
11. Develop Communication / Community Relations & Marketing Plan	Communications Specialist
12. Develop and Execute Champion Selection Process	Champion Working Group
13. Develop & Implement Immigration Scorecard	Leadership Council

## 2.2 Strategy # 2 – Integration and Retention

### **Strategy Definition & Description**

*More fully integrate immigrants already living in Halifax region by strengthening available services and support systems; and creating a welcoming community.*

A community can make a significant difference in the lives of immigrants by –

- Inviting immigrants into our communities, neighbourhoods, schools and homes;
- Delivering effective settlement services; and
- Assisting with identifying and securing a job or business opportunity.

Immigrants who are already resident in Halifax should be the primary initial beneficiaries of this strategy. By successfully retaining the immigrants who reside here now, this strategy will develop the infrastructure which will ease the way for those who arrive in the future. Additionally, a reputation of successful integration will spread quickly to immigrants' home countries, potentially attracting new immigrants in the future.

Newcomers stay in a location if they can be successful economically and are accepted in their workplaces and social fabric of the community. A successful community approach includes the following three (3) streams –

- Social and Cultural Integration,
- Effective Settlement Services, and
- Economic Integration.

<p><b>Social and Cultural Integration –</b> <b>Engage religious, ethnic, social, cultural and other groups and individuals in welcoming newcomers into our neighbourhoods, schools and communities.</b></p>	<p><b>Settlement Services –</b> <b>Carry out a detailed inventory of services, information and support available currently to identify gaps and required enhancements</b></p>	<p><b>Economic Integration –</b> <b>Engage private and public sector organizations in welcoming newcomers into our business and professional communities.</b></p>
<p>Besides economic stability, newcomers strive for meaningful social interaction and acceptance in their new home. Many newcomers experience 'Maritime hospitality' for which the region is well known. However, while hospitality is one step in the right direction, what they really crave is acceptance by and involvement in the community and the lives of those who already live here. This strategy addresses the social and cultural issues newcomers need to firmly establish a commitment to staying in the Halifax region.</p>	<p>Local settlement organizations provide a range of services to immigrants and refugees. The research and literature reviews indicate that these settlement services are critical in the early stages of an immigrants' life in a new country. The consultation process included meetings with settlement organizations, immigrants and funding agencies and what emerged is an indication that there is room for improvement. Overall coordination and enhancement of services, communication and information is needed and funding cycles and processes should be redesigned to achieve improved cost effectiveness.</p>	<p>Newcomers repeatedly identified the need to connect quickly and effectively with the business community. They also identified the barriers they encounter. Not surprisingly, the local business and professional community is aware of the barriers and while some inroads are being made to eliminate them, this strategy is intended to drive a coordinated approach across a broad spectrum of the employer and organized labour community.</p>

## Key Structures & Characteristics

Welcoming Community	Enhanced Services for Immigrants	Employment and Business Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural awareness and diversity training for community, schools and workplaces</li> <li>• Equitable practices for in the delivery of business services to immigrants</li> <li>• Resources, tools and knowledge to assist community groups and neighbourhoods with creating a welcoming community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information, resources and services to facilitate efficient orientation and settlement</li> <li>• Language Training</li> <li>• Day care, health care and other services to support women</li> <li>• Funding appropriate to meet identified needs to deliver services in both official languages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to employment and business information</li> <li>• Access to business and professional networks</li> <li>• Hiring policies and practices that encourage equitable access to employment opportunities</li> <li>• Training to Canadian standards and work experience</li> </ul>

These were the key elements identified by immigrants and service providers to achieve success in retaining immigrants in our communities. These services and supports are described in more detail in the following section.

## Operational Capacity Requirements

### Welcoming Community

#### Diversity / Cultural Awareness Education in the Community, Schools Workplaces

- There has been much publicity about immigration in the press and elsewhere in recent months. This has provided a good foundation for creating awareness of the issues. The next step is 'what to do about it' and it appears that an education and awareness program on a practical level is needed – in the workplace and in our neighbourhoods and schools. This program should be about embracing and appreciating diversity.

Such an education / awareness program should be designed to encourage curiosity about other cultures and promote acceptance and friendship of newcomers. It should include a discussion of practical differences, such as foods and aromas, relationships in the workplace, negotiating styles, and holidays and festivals, to mention a few.

### **Equitable Business Practices for Immigrants**

- Numerous examples of inequitable practices were described during the course of this study including –
  - Landlords requiring twelve (12) months rent in advance;
  - Higher than average car insurance rates; and
  - Banking practices which deny access to credit cards and lines of credit.

Government agencies and business organizations should encourage local business owners and financial institutions to review their policies and practices from a perspective of participating in the effective integration and long term retention of the immigrant population.

### **Resources, Tools and Knowledge to Create a Welcoming Community**

- Community groups, schools and neighbourhoods are important participants in this strategy. Their participation is dependent on the availability of leadership, guidance and resource materials to –
  - assist them in developing outreach programs, culturally sensitive services and practices, and
  - provide them with practical advice about inviting and involving newcomers in their communities.

### ***Enhanced Services for Immigrants***

#### **Information, Resources and Services to Facilitate Efficient Orientation and Settlement**

- Settlement and language service providers have established services which meet many of the current needs of the immigrant population. However, there are inadequate resources now to address the demand and as the number of immigrants increases, resources and services will need to keep pace.

Information about available services requires improvement. Websites, collateral materials and other communication resources need to be coordinated and marketed widely to create a level of awareness of existing services.

### **Language Training**

- English language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) are essential for successful integration into the business, professional and social communities. ESL programs are offered by a variety of publicly funded and private sector organizations, identified in Volume 2 of this report (6. Community Organizations Involved in the Immigration Agenda). It appears the general ESL programs are adequate to meet the current needs but as the

number of immigrants increases, the available programs will need to increase their capacity accordingly. There is a demand now for specific ESL requirements which are not being met. These include:

*Sector / Profession-Specific Customized ESL Programs*

- The Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre is currently engaged in a pilot project with the health sector to address specific language requirements for that sector. Other sectors / professions who have requested programs include engineers, teachers, truckers, plastics and pharmaceuticals.

*English in the Workplace*

- The Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre reports that there is a long waiting list of employers who have requested English in the Workplace training. This service is currently offered through two dedicated instructors but the demand could easily accommodate two more instructors. That this demand exists in the absence of any marketing efforts clearly indicates that with increasing numbers of immigrant workers and increased awareness, the demand for these services will increase as well.

**Day Care, Health Care and Other Services to Support Women**

- Services sensitive to women's needs is a clear need in 21<sup>st</sup> century immigrant populations. Cultural differences may disadvantage women which may lead to other unhappiness with the community. Specifically, we identified the following concerns.

*Day-Care to Allow Parents to Attend ESL Courses*

- A number of programs provide childminding services for children over five and some also provide services for infants and toddlers. These services allow immigrant adults to attend ESL courses knowing their children are being looked after in a safe and caring environment. The Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre reports that there is a need for increased services for infants and toddlers to accommodate primarily women in their efforts to learn English.

*Culturally Sensitive Health Care Services*

- While this issue may transcend genders, it appears to be more specific to women. The need to be sensitive to a variety of cultural norms is an important element in women feeling comfortable with and seeking local health care services.

*Other Services to Support Women*

- Other cultures may demand more modesty among women and / or segregation of the genders in certain circumstances. For example, Muslim women can only swim in a pool attended only by other women. An 'All Women's Swim'

was instituted at a community centre in the Halifax region to accommodate the female Muslim attendees.

### **Funding Appropriate to Meet Identified Needs to Deliver Services in Both Official Languages**

- The annual funding cycle for settlement services providers requires significant resources to pursue funding sources and generally appears to be an inefficient and time consuming process. We understand the funding processes are under review and would encourage funding agencies to consider funding based on and include –
  - Projected future needs;
  - Longer term cycles; and
  - Ancillary needs such as websites and communications.

### ***Employment and Business Opportunities***

#### **Access to Employment and Business Information**

- Whether looking for a job or looking to buy a business, the integration process could be enhanced significantly by providing information about doing business locally and access to people and organizations who can clarify and answer questions. This includes information about –
  - Legal and regulatory issues,
  - Financing and access to capital,
  - Recruitment and hiring processes and practices,
  - Filing taxes, and
  - Employee and employer rights and obligations.

#### **Access to Business and Professional Networks**

- During the course of this project, we learned about the difficulty newcomers have in accessing and being accepted into the business and professional community, with the resulting impact that business and employment opportunities are not easily identified. Employers acknowledged that 80% of the jobs are never advertised or posted and that hiring occurs on the basis of "who you know".

Likewise, we learned that immigrants interested in buying a business had difficulty determining where to learn about businesses for sale. Lack of knowledge of available services and lack of involvement in business networks were identified as significant sources of frustration.



A potential solution may be a brokering service, intended to ease immigrant's transition into the business and professional community by providing them and local organizations with access to information about each other to match –

- Businesses for sale with potential purchasers;
- Employment opportunities with job seekers; and
- Professional, labour and industry associations with potential members.

There also is a need to engage the business and professional community. While there is a high degree of interest and willingness, there is relatively little real action in actively welcoming immigrants into our 'working community'.

### **Hiring Policies and Practices that Encourage Equitable Access to Employment Opportunities**

- HRM is revamping its hiring practices to encourage diversity in the municipal workforce and to ensure equitable access for all to employment opportunities. Hiring policies and practices, job shadowing experiences, objective assessment of foreign credentials and re-evaluating the real need to have Canadian work experience are a few of the initiatives underway. HRM should be encouraged to provide leadership in this regard and share their experiences and knowledge with employers throughout the Halifax region to encourage others to follow suit.

### **Training to Canadian Standards and Work Experience**

- Learning Canadian standards and gaining work experience in a Canadian work place is a significant challenge faced by many immigrants. Employers indicate that they do not have the resources to train immigrants to Canadian standards or bring them up the learning curve. The gap in providing training and work experience for skilled workers is one that should be addressed within this strategy. The Nova Scotia Community College has indicated an interest in participating and should be engaged to develop appropriate programs to meet the needs.

### **People — Leadership & Human Resource Capability Requirements**

Identification of resource requirements to create and staff working groups should be determined by the Leadership Council when it prioritises the specific projects to be undertaken and the detailed work plans are developed. Working Groups should be chaired by a member of the Leadership Council to ensure consistency in approach and message and to provide a linkage to the overall strategy.

### ***Specific Implementation Tactics***

The tasks and activities described in the table below will require research and prioritization based on the scope and availability of resources. The federally sponsored Immigration Tool Kit to be released later this year should be used as a resource tool to launch many of the action items. It will provide valuable insights into development of content and approach.

There are several initiatives which could be undertaken quickly to create a sense of momentum and early awareness. Suggestions include:

- Bring the business community together with the immigrant community to raise awareness and provide networking opportunities. MISA reports that they have about 70 immigrant IT professionals seeking employment. This first session could be specific to the IT industry and could be jointly organized between the Greater Halifax Partnership and the Chamber of Commerce.
- HILC indicates they have a waiting list of employers requesting workplace ESL training but due to lack of resources, this need cannot be met quickly. Funding and hiring the necessary additional ESL resources to address the backlog of requests could be an early success.
- Invite the Consuls General, Honorary Consuls and other foreign government representatives to a meeting to invite input into the implementation of the strategy.
- Compile a detailed list of existing services and disseminate it widely. This list could form the basis of a gap analysis to determine additional requirements to enhance current services.

<b>Tasks / Activities</b>	<b>Accountability</b>
<b>1. Welcoming Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop / enhance Diversity / Cultural Awareness Education for Community, Schools &amp; Workplaces</li> <li>• Develop equitable business practices awareness program</li> <li>• Develop and disseminate resource materials, tools and programs for community groups and neighbourhoods</li> <li>• Develop and execute Champions communications / marketing campaign</li> </ul>	Working Groups
<b>2. Services for Immigrants</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compile list of existing services, information sources &amp; carry out a gap analysis               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop plan to fund and build / enhance required services, information needs (including website / portal), etc</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Resource profession-specific and English in the Workplace programs</li> <li>• Assess and respond to additional day-care needs</li> <li>• Assess and respond to culturally sensitive health care service needs</li> <li>• Work with funding agencies to address funding needs of settlement organizations</li> </ul>	Working Groups       Leadership Council
<b>3. Employment and Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build / enhance resource materials for Business / Professional / Employment needs (Leverage the CME Tool Kit)</li> <li>• Build / acquire a clearing house / brokerage service to match immigrant / employer needs</li> <li>• Engage business, labour and professional groups to develop outreach programs</li> <li>• Encourage HRM to take leadership role in disseminating information about equitable hiring practices</li> <li>• Work with NSCC / others to assess and develop training and workplace experience programs</li> </ul>	Working Groups

## **2.3 Strategy # 3 – Attraction**

### ***Strategy Definition & Description***

*Attract immigrants who are likely to stay because they have or have the ability to build sustainable employment, business, professional, cultural, faith or community relationships in Halifax.*

This strategy is designed to target and attract immigrants who either have employment, business, family, social or cultural ties in the Halifax region or who bring other compelling evidence that this is a place they want to make home and indeed, have the capacity to do so. This strategy includes refugees, particularly where faith and community groups provide sponsorship and support.

## Key Structures & Characteristics

Structure	Characteristics
<b>Francophone Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Halifax is home to the largest Francophone community in Nova Scotia with approximately 12,000 residents. 10% of residents in the Halifax region speak French, either as a first or second language</li> <li>An established elementary and secondary school system exists in the region with three (3) schools – one high school and 2 elementary schools. The province is also home to a French university</li> <li>A significant network of Francophone service and cultural organizations exists throughout the province, most of whom retain membership in Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse (FANE)</li> <li>Conseil communautaire du Grand-Havre is the primary local organization which provides employment and business services, coordinates cultural activities and organizes health care services in French</li> <li>The CCGH is about to launch a pilot project to coordinate Francophone immigration for Halifax, for which recruitment and welcoming tools and resources will be developed</li> <li>The Francophone Chamber of Commerce (FCC) was established in March 2005 with a membership of about 60 Francophone businesses. The FCC works in partnership with the Halifax Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>In partnership with MISA, the CCGH has translated a number of resource materials into French and is working with MISA to develop French speaking services</li> <li>FANE has participated in international recruitment missions as recently as in the spring 2005</li> <li>The Francophone and Lebanese communities have recently established linkages (many Lebanese speak French as a second language)</li> <li>FANE recently sponsored its first immigrant on behalf of the Lebanese community through the NSNP under the Community-identified stream</li> </ul>

Structure	Characteristics
<b>Existing Ethno-Cultural and Faith Communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on the 2001 census, about 25,000 longstanding and recent immigrants call the Halifax region home.</li> <li>Two thirds of all established immigrants living in Halifax come from 12 nations.</li> <li>Nova Scotia has 27 Consuls General, Honorary Consuls and other foreign government representatives.</li> <li>Many international communities have well established social, cultural and business networks and infrastructure - 46 international associations are members of the Multicultural Association of Nova Scotia. See Volume 2 of this Report (6. Community Organizations Involved in the Immigration Agenda).</li> <li>Religious communities often transcend ethnicity and are truly multi-cultural in nature.</li> <li>These established communities already support newcomers and attract immigrants from their home countries. These communities may also have the capability to sponsor refugees and connect with their sister communities in other Canadian centres to attract secondary migrants.</li> </ul>
<b>International Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 2,500 international students were attracted to Halifax universities in the past year and the number has been increasing over the past 5 years.</li> <li>Students are well educated, culturally diverse and speak English</li> <li>They establish roots in the community during their tenure as students</li> <li>They bring knowledge of and connections in their home countries which are potentially transferable into the Halifax business environment</li> <li>Data from the Association of Atlantic Universities suggests that close to 26% of the student population from outside the region remains here following graduation. It is not known whether these statistics apply to international students but perhaps CIC could be encouraged to track the number of international students receiving landed immigrant status in the future</li> <li>While student visas preclude students from entering the country with the intent of seeking landed immigrant status, many of them arrive at that conclusion during their years at universities</li> <li>Authorization to seek employment off campus and the extension of post graduation employment from one to two years will provide international students with additional valuable work experience to enhance their immigration potential</li> </ul>

Structure	Characteristics
<b>Nova Scotia Nominee Program &amp; Federal Immigration categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All 3 Federal classes and the 3 existing NSNP streams provide opportunities to attract immigrants through existing businesses, families, international and religious communities. With support, encouragement and education, all of these categories can be better utilized to attract investors, business owners, skilled workers, family members and refugees.</li> <li>• The NSNP allows the Province to nominate up to 1000 immigrant candidates and their families over 5 years. These numbers, while limited at the moment, provide increased opportunities for attracting immigrants to Halifax who are more likely potential to stay long term</li> <li>• Expansion of the NSNP by 3 new streams targeted at the international student population, family businesses and entrepreneurs will potentially encourage immigrants to consider Nova Scotia and Halifax over other locations.</li> <li>• A bilateral agreement between the federal and provincial governments and agreements between the Province of Nova Scotia and the post secondary education institutions are currently being negotiated to allow international students to work off campus. The intent of this initiative is to encourage students to make employment connections and gain Canadian work experience to enhance their immigration potential, should they decide to seek landed immigrant status.</li> </ul>
<b>Comprehensive and targeted marketing campaign to attract immigrants to Halifax</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The chances of increasing the number of newcomers to the region are greatly enhanced through education and awareness. Both a significantly enhanced web presence and collateral materials would allow the message to get out.</li> <li>• Leveraging existing opportunities through partnerships and education provide other avenues. Following examples provide suggestions for opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Anecdotally, we are aware that employees in Canadian foreign posts know little about Nova Scotia or Halifax</li> <li>- Trade missions travel around the world and while they act as ambassadors for the province they have not explicitly targeted immigration as part of their agenda</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Labour Market Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of Halifax-specific labour market information is a deterrent to attracting skilled workers to the region.</li> <li>• As skills shortages become apparent, labour market adjustment will be dependent on sound sources of data</li> <li>• Several initiatives are underway provincially and federally to enhance existing methodologies and tools and to develop better information and projection models</li> <li>• The Greater Halifax Partnership <i>Business Retention &amp; Expansion</i> initiative is engaged in collecting data to identify and address labour demand issues</li> </ul>

## ***Operational Capacity Requirements***

### ***Community Support Needs***

Francophone, ethno-cultural and faith communities should be provided with resource materials to encourage them to participate in the immigration agenda. These resources should provide them with information about the immigration process and available services prior to and on arrival of an immigrant.

With the launch of the CCGH immigration pilot likely in August 2005, there is an excellent opportunity to work closely with the Francophone community to leverage resources, program development and communication / marketing materials.

Information, education and communication were identified throughout our research process as being key to successful attraction, integration and retention of newcomers. The foundational piece to achieving a communications program is the creation of a marketing and communications function to –

- Communicate in multiple languages;
- Facilitate relationships with the media; and
- Coordinate education and communication activities and initiatives with the Provincial and Federal governments and across all operations.

### ***Target Markets***

The communications / education function would focus on three markets – the international, national and the local Halifax markets. Initiatives would include –

- International / National:
  - Researching and developing criteria to identify those immigrants who would be most likely to make a long term commitment to the Halifax region;
  - Marketing campaign to recruit and attract immigrants and secondary migrants including website, collateral materials;
  - Education materials and familiarization tours for embassy staff; and
  - Leveraging trade missions to act as immigration ambassadors for Halifax.
- Local Initiatives:
  - Recruiting the Francophone, ethno-cultural and faith communities to engage in actively encouraging immigration to Nova Scotia in their home countries;
  - Developing education and awareness programs and materials to provide information and educate residents about welcoming newcomers;
  - Promoting immigration to international students. Provide interactive support to facilitate improved turn around time in the in the immigration application process.



### *Nova Scotia Nominee Program*

Using the NSNP to its fullest potential by improving utilization and expanding both the allowable quota of immigrants and the streams will provide a powerful tool in attracting immigrants. The Leadership Council should take on the role of advocate to work with the Province and the federal government in operationalizing and shaping the NSNP to best address local needs.

The federal government must understand the importance of immigration to the region and specific overtures to enhance their awareness should continue and in fact, increase. Locally, targeted messages and services to enhance employers and business owners' knowledge of the NSNP and generally of immigration policies and processes should be developed.

### ***People — Leadership & Human Resource Capability Requirements***

This strategy should engage a wide range of individuals including the following –

- **Communications and community relations expertise**
  - The communications / marketing efforts should be lead by the communications / community relations specialist positioned on the core Project Team, working closely with Provincial and Federal government communications personnel.
- **Foreign Government Representatives and leaders** from the Francophone, ethno-cultural and faith communities, and international student affairs personnel in the local universities
  - Involvement from the ethno-cultural communities and involvement of the international student affairs personnel will be important in providing potential immigrants with quality information and connecting them with existing communities.
- **Business and Immigrant Champions**
  - The Champions should play a key role in the communications / marketing initiatives. They should be featured prominently locally and act as ambassadors internationally.
- **Business people going on trade missions acting as immigration ambassadors**
  - These individuals will require briefings, marketing collateral and support in delivering the immigration message internationally.
- **Leadership Council**
  - The Council's role as advocate for the NSNP and other related immigration policies will need to be defined in the MOU.

## Specific Implementation Tactics

Several early, high impact activities could include –

- Working with CCGH to launch the Francophone immigration pilot;
- Working with ACOA, Greater Halifax Partnership and Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) to pilot the immigration ambassador concept for the next trade mission;
- Hosting a networking event for employers and international students, organized jointly by the business organizations (providing successful resolution of negotiations to allow off campus employment); and
- Learning more about the pilot in Truro to recruit temporary foreign workers for the trucking industry, with the intent of potentially moving forward with a similar approach.

Tasks / Activities	Accountability
<b>1. Community Support Needs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the ethno-cultural and faith communities to develop resource materials / programs to assist them in attracting immigrants</li> <li>• Work with the CCGH to launch the Francophone immigration pilot</li> </ul>	Work Groups
<b>2. Target markets</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and develop criteria to identify immigrants most suitable to the Halifax region</li> <li>• Develop communications / marketing campaign for international markets</li> <li>• Develop communications / marketing campaign for national market to attract secondary immigrants</li> <li>• Develop collateral materials for and program for embassy staff</li> <li>• Work with ACOA, Greater Halifax Partnership and NSBI to leverage trade missions</li> <li>• Develop communications / education campaign targeted at local residents. Engage Champions as 'the voice of immigration'</li> <li>• Work with the universities' international student affairs organizations to facilitate student immigration application support</li> </ul>	<p>Communications Specialist</p> <p>Working Group</p>

Tasks / Activities	Accountability
<p><b>3. NSNP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Include Leadership Council's role as an advocate for shaping the NSNP in the MOU</li><li>• Develop approach to increasing the federal government's appreciation of the need for immigration</li><li>• Educate employers and business owners about the NSNP and immigration policies and processes</li></ul>	<p>Leadership Council</p>

### **3. STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION**

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In addition to immigration, there are a number of other important strategies underway in the municipality and the province, mentioned previously in this report –

- The Regional Plan is nearing completion;
- The HRM Economic Strategy will be completed by the fall;
- The HRM Cultural Plan is currently underway;
- The Province is revisiting the NS Opportunities for Prosperity plan;
- The province will also be undertaking a study on the impacts of ageing population; and
- There has been consideration around a labour force strategy.

Immigration is a component piece of all of these plans and ultimately, should simply become a way of doing business in the city and the province. On that premise, this plan is designed with the view that it forms the foundation for attracting and welcoming newcomers into the Halifax region with the intent that they stay long-term. The foundation elements described in this implementation plan should be in place within the next two years at which time, the Leadership Council should review the ongoing need for continuation of a stand alone immigration initiative. Ultimately, all elements of this project should reside with existing organizations so the need for an ongoing project team is either no longer necessary or can be scaled back.

During the stakeholder consultation sessions, we heard many suggestions about opportunities for improvement. A list of these can be found in Volume 2, Chapter 2.

### 3.1 Implementation Timeframes

The following Gantt chart sets out a preliminary, high-level overview of an approximate schedule for the implementation plan.

HR Immigration Strategy Implementation Plan (Preliminary Schedule)	Year One				Year Two			
	Q-1	Q-2	Q-3	Q-4	Q-1	Q-2	Q-3	Q-4
<b>Strategy #1 – Leadership &amp; Infrastructure</b>								
Seek Council Support for the Strategic Action Plan								
Engage Mayor & Council as Champions								
<b>Leadership &amp; Funding</b>								
Form Leadership Council								
Select Operating Executive								
Draft MOU								
Project Team - Organization & Establishment								
Funding Plan & Proposal Development								
<b>Planning</b>								
Planning - Charter & Implementation Work Plan								
Develop Communications / Marketing Plan								
Select Business & Community Champions								
Develop Immigration Scorecard								
<b>Strategy #2 - Integration &amp; Retention</b>								
<b>Welcoming Community</b>								
Develop / enhance Diversity Education								
Develop Equitable business practice message								
Develop & disseminate community resource materials								
<b>Services for Immigrants</b>								
Compile list of existing services								
Develop plan to enhance services								
Resource custom ESL programs								
Assess & respond to day care needs								
Assess & respond to health care needs								
Address settlement organization funding needs								
<b>Employment &amp; Business</b>								
Build/enhance resource materials (leverage CME Tool Kit)								
Build/acquire clearing house								
Engage business, labour to develop outreach programs								
Encourage equitable hiring practices								
Work with NSCC to develop training programs								
<b>Strategy #3 - Attraction / Communication</b>								
<b>Community Support Needs</b>								
Develop community resource materials								
Work with CCGH to launch Francophone pilot								
<b>Target Markets</b>								
Develop Marketing plan for international/national markets								
Trade Missions								
Develop Local communications/education program								
International student immigration support								
<b>NSNP</b>								
Develop approach to increase federal gov't awareness								
Educate employers about NSNP								
First Year Review								
Second Year Review								
Decide ongoing need for Immigration Project								

## **3.2 Targets and Performance Measurements**

Three sets of measures are proposed –

- Progress on the project which will be measured against the implementation plan through regular status reporting;
- Effectiveness of the initiatives will be both anecdotal and could also be measured through survey work;
- Ultimate outcomes with respect to attracting and retaining immigrants – based on the target attraction and retention numbers.

### ***Progress on the Project***

The implementation plan will be based on specific milestones and achievement of the milestones will be a primary measurement tool with respect to progress against plan. The Immigration Scorecard will provide specific targets and measures; identify accountabilities; and track input and output indicators.

### ***Effectiveness of the Initiatives***

Anecdotal evidence aside, survey work will be required to provide the primary measures. Benchmarks already exist around a number of measures such as -

- Nova Scotians' attitudes towards immigrants and immigration as reported in NovaKnowledge's 2004 Report Card; and
- Employer attitudes and practices in hiring immigrants based on work undertaken by the Greater Halifax Partnership.

These measures will provide an indication of whether the programs, services, communications and education initiated through this project and others are having an effect on residents and employers in the Halifax region. These survey studies should be undertaken and reported annually, at a minimum.

### ***Attraction and Retention***

The attraction target is defined as the arrival of 2800 new immigrants 'within four years of full strategy implementation'. For the purposes of this strategy, 'full implementation' is assumed to mean completion or near completion of the initiatives outlined in this project or two years following project start-up. Therefore, the target number should be achieved by 2011, assuming the project starts up in 2005.

Based on data provided by Cornwallis Financial, the NSNP received an increase of 126 applications in the first nine months of the year commencing July 2004 over the previous 12-month period. In that same period, the number of nomination certificates issued increased from 50 to 114. These numbers are an indication that the NSNP is achieving results and the numbers can be tracked on an ongoing basis. The number of new immigrants should continue to increase over the course of the next six years based on current evidence, regardless of whether this strategy is effective or not. Therefore, to determine the effectiveness of this strategy some assumptions will need to be made regarding the potential incremental impact that might be achieved through the work of local organizations, as well as through marketing and education initiatives.

The real impact from this strategy should be seen in the achievement of the 70% retention target. Unfortunately, those numbers are known only through the census every five years. The attraction numbers are tracked by the Office of Immigration on an ongoing basis and through CIC.

### **3.3 Resource Requirements**

#### ***Summary of Requirements***

To achieve effective implementation of the proposed strategies, it will be important that adequate resources – both human and financial -- be committed.

It is important to note that these resources are required to implement new initiatives in the Halifax Region immigration arena. There will be no duplication of effort in services currently being offered. In addition, the funding required will be sought from non-traditional sources so there will be no competition with immigration service providers for scarce financial resources.

### ***Description of Resources Required***

The Implementation Plan anticipates the need for a Project Director and support resources. The nature of such resources will depend upon the activities underway at any particular point in time over the next two years.

Communications, co-ordination and marketing activities are central to effective implementation of all three strategies. It is intended that any collateral materials developed for this initiative will build on and enhance materials and initiatives of other stakeholders to the maximum extent practicable. The plan assumes that *reinvention of wheels will be avoided!*

Nonetheless, significant investments will be required to support development of such items as –

- Halifax-focused communications materials;
- Multi-media community focused marketing campaign;
- Website / portal;
- International promotional materials;
- Business resource materials and toolkits;
- Welcoming community collateral and toolkits; and,
- Social and cultural focused materials.

In addition, various events are included in the plan and will need budget resources.