



# Proposed brand strategy

Presentation to Executive Committee | March 24, 2014

# Overview

- **The branding journey**
- **A different conversation with citizens**
- **Unprecedented community engagement**
- **Local and international businesses' perspective**
- **Branding strategy and promise**

# The branding journey

## What will a successful brand do?

- Better position Halifax in a global marketplace and help us better manage identity
- Better reflect our best characteristics and attributes in a current context
- Allow us to tell our cumulative stories in a consistent, distinct and authentic style
- Allow us to make “on-brand” decisions about growth, marketing, policy, etc.

# The branding journey

## **April-May 2013: Council directed HRM Corporate Communications to:**

- Take a leadership role in articulating a brand for the Halifax region
- Develop an RFP for a brand consultant leverage internal resources and implement the new brand incrementally
- Refresh halifax.ca simultaneously with the brand

# The branding journey

- **July-Oct. 2013 – extensive RFP process**
- **Nov. 2013 – RFP awarded to Revolve Branding Inc.**
- **Dec. 2013 – project launch and community engagement kick off**

# A different conversation

## We asked everyone

- *What does living in the Halifax region mean to you?*
- *What makes the Halifax region unique?*
- *What about the Halifax region makes you most proud?*



# Unprecedented engagement

## Success would be defined

- Through deep buy-in involving all citizens and stakeholders using an innovative and open process
- By support of Council (from proposed strategy to end result) of a master brand approach
- Through broad stakeholder adoption and advocacy to support our city's growth and prosperity

# Unprecedented engagement

## Different approaches and multiple channels

- Street Teams vs. set events
- Chalkboard comments
- Online and phone surveys

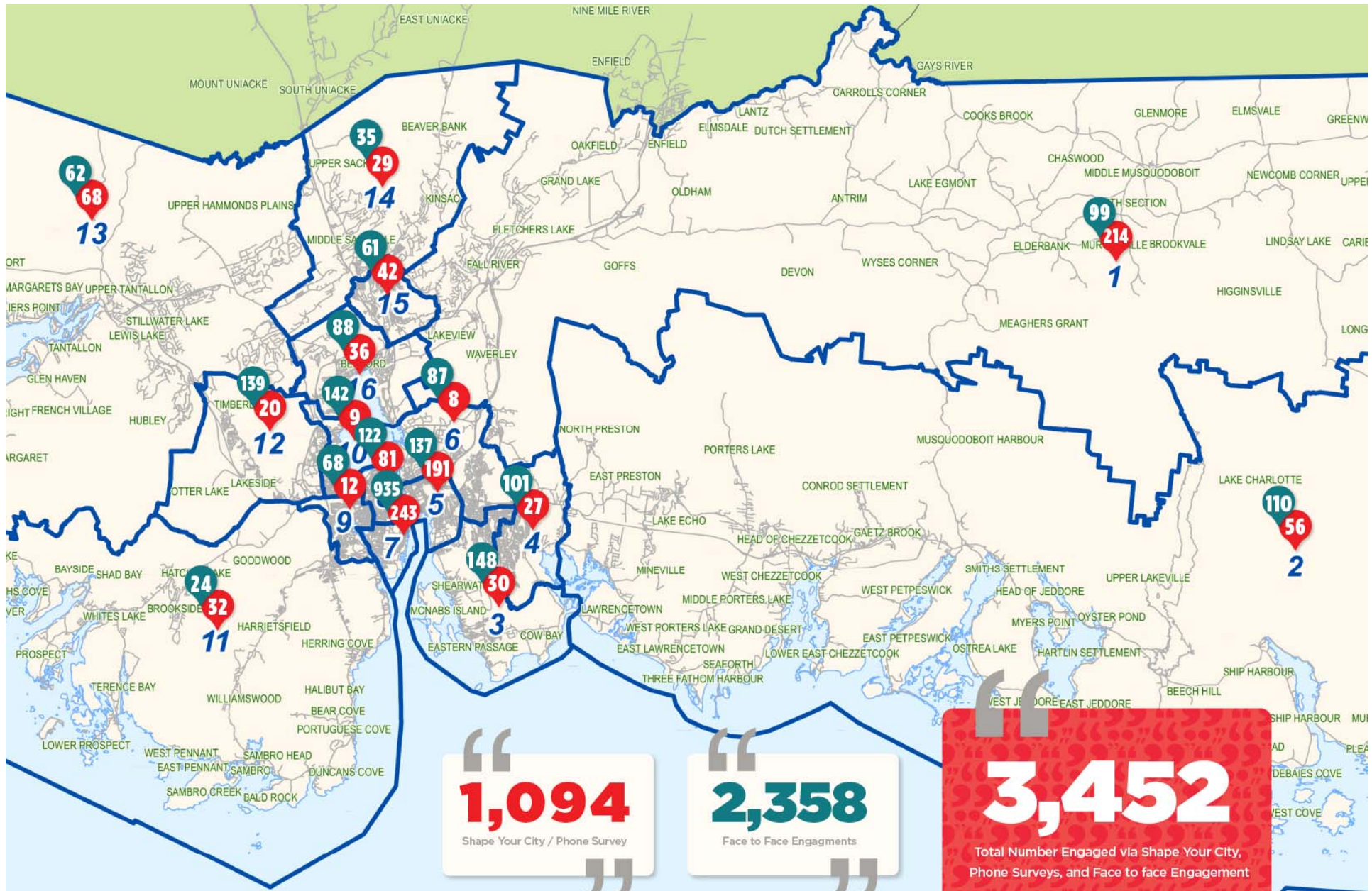




# Unprecedented engagement

- **8 Focus groups with Regional Council, HRM staff, local business leaders, multicultural groups, academics, military, services, the arts, and international business**
- **33 one-on-one interviews**





“  
**1,094**  
 ”  
 Shape Your City / Phone Survey

“  
**2,358**  
 ”  
 Face to Face Engagements

“  
**3,452**  
 ”  
 Total Number Engaged via Shape Your City,  
 Phone Surveys, and Face to face Engagement

# Unprecedented engagement

## Diverse and extensive social media

- More than 16,500 visitors viewed materials and information through
  - DefineHalifaxRegion.com
  - ShapeYourCityHalifax.ca
  - Twitter, Facebook, You Tube, Instagram



# Unprecedented engagement

**20,000+**

**Residents engaged in brand strategy  
process**

# What we heard – citizens

## **A strong appetite across all interests for**

- Positive, progressive, innovative approach with our place brand
- Single rallying cry with equal parts inspirational and aspirational to create an easily identifiable brand that consistently puts our best foot forward

# Perceived key attributes

- **Accessible and connected**
- **Developing and progressing, grounded in a rich history**
- **Innovative, educated and entrepreneurial**
- **Liveable, vibrant community**
- **Hard-working and down-to-earth**

# Perceived key barriers

- **A pervasive negative attitude that needs to be replaced with a willingness and openness to new ideas and change**
- **A need to talk about and celebrate successes**
- **A need for more job creation to keep young people here, and to boost immigration**
- **A need for increased investment in innovation, entrepreneurship and infrastructure**

# What we heard – businesses

- **International Brand is a key pillar of Economic Strategy**
  - GHP led business engagement as part of developing the master brand
- **Recent work builds on previous consultation work for Int'l Brand**
  - Hosted brand events for businesses and community leaders
  - Conducted research on perceptions of local businesses and site location consultants across North America



# Perceived key attributes

- **Safe place to run a business, fun place to live**
- **Great port access, gateway to world**
- **Known as a desirable location for visitors and tourists, associated with “back office” and logistics/transportation industries**
- **Highly educated workforce, leading post secondary institutions, marine research**
- **Top quality health care services**
- **Cultural centre, environmental leader**

# Perceived key barriers

- **High overall tax burden for businesses**
- **High utility costs for businesses**
- **Business climate has not really improved over the last five years**
- **Need for more business-friendly government and more incentives for investment**
- **Need for more efficient road and public transportation**
- **Need for better marketing to draw new businesses here**

# What did all of this tell us?

- Residents, communities, stakeholder and businesses *are ready* for a strong brand vision, mission and promise that is a rallying cry to break down barriers that hold us back from experiencing the kind of success we're capable of achieving
- We need a brand that can be genuinely adopted and repeated by everyone across the region


# Where does the feedback go?



**Revolve Branding's DNA discovery model**

# Recommendation

- **Executive Committee recommend that Regional Council approve brand strategy**
- **Direct staff to develop visual identity based on approved brand strategy/promise for Council approval**



**Comments or questions?**

Rebranding strategy | March 24, 2014