

**TO:** Chair and Members of Community Planning & Economic Development

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original signed by  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Church, Government Relations & External Affairs

**DATE:** June 5, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Update of HRM's 2005 Immigration Plan and Local Immigration  
Partnership Funding Opportunity

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**ORIGIN**

May 10, 2005 Regional Council Meeting:  
MOVED by Councillor Streach, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that Halifax Regional  
Council adopt a vision for immigration.  
MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

October 18, 2005 Regional Council Meeting:  
Council was provided an Information Report and accompanying HRM Immigration Action Plan

April 30, 2013 Regional Council Meeting:  
MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Nicoll, that Halifax Regional Council  
direct staff to provide a report which outlines the benefits and costs of having HRM negotiate a  
funding agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) for 3-year funding, to house  
the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Coordinator.  
MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

**88 (1)** The Council may expend money required by the Municipality for promotion and attraction  
of institutions, industries and businesses, the stabilization and expansion of employment  
opportunities and the economic development of the Municipality.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. It is recommended Halifax Regional Council approve the attached updated Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan
2. It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council authorize staff to seek funding in the amount of \$160,473 from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) for 3-year funding, to administer the part time Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Coordinator.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **HRM's Immigration Action Plan**

Attracting and retaining talented and creative workers is a key to economic success. According to the Federation of Canadian Municipality's (FCM) 2012 report "Starting on Solid Ground: The Municipal Role in Immigrant Settlement", due to low birth rates and an aging population, immigration has become the principal strategy to encourage population growth across Canada. The report states that despite the fact Municipalities are neither mandated nor funded to provide immigrant settlement support services, there is a realization they are key players in newcomers successful settlement, attraction, and retention. As a result, municipalities are integrating immigrant needs into their budgets and business plans, with a focus on building and maintaining welcoming communities. That means creating communities where diversity adds to the social and economic vibrancy of the community; services are developed with diverse users in mind; and a quality of life is enjoyed by all residents. FCM's report recommends Municipalities consider the following when building a welcoming community:

- Hiring practices that represent the Municipality's diverse demographics;
- Diverse social engagement opportunities and events;
- Accessible public spaces and recreation opportunities;
- Public safety considerations; and
- Communications regarding municipal services that accommodate a diverse demographic.

HRM's first Immigration Action Plan was endorsed by Regional Council in 2005 along with a vision which states:

*"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".*

Since that time, many of the activities defined in the action plan have been completed. An update on progress was provided to the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee of

Council (CPED) in February of 2013 (Attachment A). At that time, staff indicated work was underway to update the 2005 Immigration Action Plan.

The plan has been updated and initiatives have been identified which continue to move the Municipality towards being a more welcoming community to newcomers and residents alike. This updated plan; renamed "HRM's Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan" to better reflect what HRM is trying to achieve, was developed with input from business, government, non-profit organizations, immigrant settlement organizations and newcomers themselves. Various Business Units; including Community and Recreation Services, Halifax Regional Police, Human Resources, Planning and Infrastructure, and Transportation and Public Works along with Corporate Communications, were consulted while drafting the updated plan. In addition, ISIS and the Greater Halifax Partnership reviewed and provided input on the draft outcome plan. Several HRM strategies, including the Regional Plan, Cultural Plan, and Economic Strategy helped to shape the plan. Ongoing engagement with stakeholder groups over the next five years, will be necessary in order to track progress and report back on success in delivering on the actions set out in the outcome plan. (Attachment B)

### **Local Immigration Partnerships**

On April 11, 2013, Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services (ISIS) did a presentation to CPED providing context on immigration in HRM and information on a Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) funding opportunity. The matter was presented to Regional Council by the Chair of CPED and staff were directed to report back on the benefits and costs associated with the LIP grant.

Local Immigration Partnerships were initiated by CIC in partnership with the Province of Ontario in 2009; as a way to provide ground-level funding to local and regional governments, recognizing they are most familiar with the needs of the communities they serve. Although municipalities throughout Canada have different mandates and approaches to immigration, there are now over 40 different LIPs being funded across Ontario and Calgary, with more being considered across the country. Each is meeting the needs of their respective municipal mandates. Local Immigration Partnerships are regional, municipal, or neighbourhood coalitions charged with developing and implementing strategies and action plans aimed at producing more welcoming communities.

A five-month project to consider an LIP for the Halifax area was hosted by ISIS from October 2012 to March 2013, with funding provided by CIC. A key component of the project was to consult with a broader range of stakeholders by way of a community forum. A diverse group of stakeholders from all three levels of government, the business sector, community organizations, universities, unions, immigrant support agencies, health and recreation service providers, and local immigrants took part in the forum discussion.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **HRM's Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan**

In an environment where talented workers are highly mobile, municipalities must be competitive in creating a quality of life and welcoming environment for newcomers in acknowledgement of the value they bring to their new communities. As home to 55% of Atlantic Canadian immigrants and 75% of immigrants to Nova Scotia, HRM has a significant vested interest in providing the most welcoming environment possible for newcomers. HRM's ability to maintain and build upon the immigrant population is fundamental to our region's economic, social and cultural success.

HRM's economic future is tied directly to our ability to successfully attract and retain newcomers. As the workforce continues to age and Halifax approaches a wave of retirements, there is risk of a labour shortage and an urgent need to leverage human capital. FCM's 2012 report "Starting on Solid Ground: The Municipal Role in Immigrant Settlement" states a focus on immigration is important because:

- Immigrants provide valuable skills that may be in short supply, helping to reduce labour gaps and support local businesses;
- Immigrant workers help balance age demographics;
- Immigrants help bring diversity to a city and enrich the local culture, supporting the creative and cultural industries.

The purpose of the Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan is to identify the outcomes and measures to achieve success in integrating and retaining newcomers and creating a welcoming and friendly community for all. Over a five year period, the plan provides a mechanism to track and report back on the Municipality's ability to deliver on the objectives over time.

The five outcomes identified by the various HRM Business Units and stakeholders consulted in the updated strategy include:

1. HRM staff value diversity and are provided with the appropriate tools to serve diverse client groups
2. HRM communication tools are developed to serve and represent diverse groups
3. HRM programs and services support a welcoming community
4. HRM celebrates and enables a variety of cultural and creative opportunities
5. HRM maximizes opportunities for increased alignment, awareness, engagement and retention through partner organizations

The attached draft plan is intended to provide Council with information specific to content and intent. Once approved, it will be reviewed, formatted and designed in consultation with Corporate Communications staff, and then made available online at Halifax.ca. HRM's CPED Standing Committee Terms of Reference, section 3.2.3 states the purpose of the Committee includes the oversight of the progress of HRM's Immigration Action Plan and related initiatives. Therefore, staff will provide regular reports to the committee on progress while implementing the updated five year plan.

### **Local Immigration Partnerships**

During the time the HRM Welcoming Communities Action Plan was being reviewed, an opportunity to consider a Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) for Halifax arose. Each LIP across Canada has developed independently, responding directly to local needs and context. They are collective impact initiatives where committed and influential partners work to positively change settlement and integration outcomes for newcomers.

A community forum hosted by ISIS and funded by CIC, was held on on March 7, 2013. Objectives of the Forum included:

1. Learning more about Local Immigration Partnerships
2. Discussing a collaborative, community approach to newcomers' integration to the Halifax Regional Municipality
3. Considering a plan for next steps

Four topics were presented for discussions: social and cultural inclusion, economic integration and growth, health and wellbeing, and English as an additional language.

Many newcomers do not have good access to the variety of opportunities available in their new communities. An LIP can assist by helping them connect with relative ease and as a result, make meaningful contributions to their new city more quickly. Cities can then continue to prosper as newcomers succeed and participate fully in their communities. Participants who attended the LIP forum communicated support for a LIP to be developed in HRM in an effort to address barriers to newcomer integration and participation. It was recommended by the participants of the forum, Halifax Regional Municipality be the lead organization to negotiate with CIC for the funding and to administer the grant. Some specific advantages for HRM identified for this approach include:

- Alignment with HRM's updated Welcoming Communities Action Plan;
- Alignment with HRM's Economic Strategy and the Talent goal to create a welcoming community where the world's talent can find great opportunities, engaged employers and resources for career advancement;
- HRM's efforts through the Economic Strategy to develop a new international brand and current thrust to being an internationally recognized city; and

- Demonstrates Halifax is “open” to immigrants and provides a focus for creating a welcoming community.

Based on the Forum participants' group discussions and the evaluation summary, it was recommended the Halifax LIP take a collaborative approach to building a welcoming community with two main focusses:

1. An intra-sector focus:
  - a) inform local service providers about the services and programs available
  - b) facilitate conversations to enhance collaboration
2. A social marketing focus:
  - a) to create a cultural shift to aid Halifax in becoming a more welcoming community by creating a better understanding of the benefits of attracting and retaining immigrants

The LIP Coordinator is a part time position funded by CIC and would be employed to do the following over the next 3 years:

- Develop a multi-sectorial partnership at the local community level, ensuring newcomer needs are integrated into the community planning process, identify community-specific strategic priorities, and implement action plans to improve newcomer outcomes;
- Provide coordination to the partnership;
- Develop indicators and report back on progress;
- Research best practices;
- Leverage partnerships within the community;
- Facilitate HRM staff meetings and organize community forum(s); and
- Take lead on education & promotion around the welcoming community initiative.

It is anticipated that a Halifax LIP would not only complement existing activities, but also help more fully integrate and optimize these activities. In addition, the LIP would build on current successes in the community, and work with what is already in place, rather than supplanting other efforts or working in parallel.

### **Benefits to HRM from hosting the CIC LIP Grant**

The beneficiaries will include stakeholders, organizations, employers, governments, as well as residents of HRM. The benefits will include:

- Alignment with HRM's updated Welcoming Newcomer Action Plan objectives; particularly the outcome to maximize opportunities for alignment, awareness, engagement and retention through partner organizations;
- Expanded cross-sector partnerships for planning and setting priorities;

- Enhanced capacity for research on immigrant outcomes;
- Facilitated new connections and collaborations;
- Increased awareness of immigrant needs;
- Better coordination of settlement activities;
- Improved access to services, particularly from mainstream agencies;
- Increased stakeholder awareness of immigrant needs;
- Inclusion of immigrant needs in planning and priority setting processes; and
- Annual evaluations to measure progress toward meeting described outcomes.

### **Funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada for a Local Immigration Partnership**

The funding requested to CIC is for \$160,473 for a three year period, and is intended to support a part time staff person and administrative costs. That amount is broken down over the three year period as follows:

#### **Year 1:**

Salaries & Benefits	32,747
Administrative Costs	17,900
HRM In-Kind Contribution	700*
Administration (15% of total budget)	7,799
<u>GST/HST</u>	<u>1,343</u>
Total Project Costs for year 1	60,489

#### **Year 2:**

Salaries & Benefits	29,609
Administrative Costs	12,900
HRM In-Kind Contribution	700*
Administration (15% of total budget)	6,522
<u>GST/HST</u>	<u>968</u>
Total Project Costs for year 1	50,699

#### **Year 3:**

Salaries & Benefits	30,206
Administrative Costs	12,900
HRM In-Kind Contribution	700*
Administration (15% of total budget)	6,611
<u>GST/HST</u>	<u>968</u>
Total Project Costs for year 1	51,385

\*The cost to HRM would be \$2100.00 in kind support over the three year period. HRM's role would be to administer the LIP coordinator, contribute in-kind items such as office equipment, supplies, and supervision.

As the CIC funding is guaranteed for three years only, future sustainability of a LIP would be in the hands of the community it serves, drawing financial and other support from within its membership. For example, Calgary has a sustainability model in place for when their three year CIC LIP funding concludes, which includes a partnership between the City of Calgary, the United Way and the Immigrant Sector Council of Calgary. If a partnership arrangement cannot be reached, there may be pressure for HRM to fund this activity in its entirety once the funding expires.

A follow-up report will be provided to Council pending the results of the funding negotiations with CIC to provide more details around the term of the part time position and final grant numbers.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

With respect to the updated Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan; where there is a budget impact, costs will be built into the unit's business plans on an annual basis and approved as part of the budget process.

With respect to the Local Immigration Partnership opportunity, the cost to HRM would be \$2,100.00 in kind support which would be derived from Government Relations and External Affairs budget.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Input from Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services as well as the Greater Halifax Partnership helped to define the actions in the draft Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan. In addition, the 2010 "A Place for Everyone: A Formative Evaluation of the Halifax Regional Municipality Immigration Action Plan; a report for the Atlantic Metropolis Centre for Excellence" written by Karin Kronstal, Master of Planning student from Dalhousie School of Planning, provided recommendations for improvements in the existing 2005 HRM Immigration Action Plan.

A community forum held on March 7th 2013 hosted by ISIS and funded by CIC, to determine the need for a LIP and the types of outcomes the CIC funded position would work toward achieving. A broad range of stakeholders were consulted including the three levels of government, the business sector, community organizations, universities, unions, immigrant support agencies, health and recreation service providers, and local immigrants.



**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

No implications

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. Regional Council can decide not to endorse HRM's Welcoming Newcomers Strategy
2. Regional Council can decide not to host the part time LIP coordinator staff person funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada

**ATTACHMENTS**

- A. February 14, 2013 Community Planning and Economic Development Committee of Council Report "Update Report on HRM's 2005 Immigration Action Plan
- B. HRM's Draft 2013 Welcoming Newcomers Action Plan and Outcome Grid

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Marion Currie, Government Relations and External Affairs, 490-6422

Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Church, Managing Director Government Relations and External Affairs, 490-3677

Financial Approval by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Greg Keefe, Director of Finance & ICT/CFO, 490-6308

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**Community Planning and Economic Development  
February 14, 2013**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Community Planning and Economic Development

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original signed by  
Chris Bryant, Government Relations and External Affairs

**DATE:** January 22, 2013

**SUBJECT:** HRM's 2005 Immigration Action Plan Update

**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

May 10, 2005 Regional Council Meeting:  
MOVED by Councillor Streach, seconded by Councillor Sloane, that Halifax Regional Council adopt a vision for immigration. Staff committed to develop an immigration action plan, focussed on specific tangible actions HRM would pursue to achieve the goal of a more welcoming community, and report back to Council.  
MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

October 18, 2005 Regional Council Meeting:  
Council was provided an Information Report and accompanying HRM Immigration Action Plan  
March 31, 2009 Regional Council was provided an Information Report on HRM's Immigration Plan progress and the Newcomers' Guide

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Business and Industrial Development, 71(1)b

## **BACKGROUND**

Despite the fact Municipalities are neither mandated nor funded to provide immigrant support services, they are key players in the successful settlement, attraction, and retention of immigrants. Immigration is vital to local economic development strategies, cultural diversity and sustainable growth. In an environment where talented workers are highly mobile, municipalities must be competitive in creating a high quality of life and welcoming environment for newcomers in acknowledgement of the value they bring to their new communities.

In May 2005, Halifax Regional 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."*

HRM drafted its first Immigration Action Plan in an effort to operationalize that vision. It was presented to Council in September, 2005.

HRM's Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee Terms of Reference, section 3.2.3 states the purpose of the Committee includes the oversight of the progress of HRM's Immigration Action Plan and related initiatives.

## **DISCUSSION**

As home to 55% of Atlantic Canadian immigrants and 80% of immigrants to Nova Scotia, HRM has a significant vested interest in providing the most welcoming environment possible for newcomers. HRM's ability to maintain and build upon the immigrant population is fundamental to our region's economic, social and cultural success.

The plan describes HRM's primary role in immigration as creating and maintaining a welcoming community and is in line with Councils' Immigration vision statement. The plan identifies broad objectives and lists specific actions for the Municipality to undertake, and focusses on internal operational changes as well as external communication improvements. Actions are prioritized into short and medium term categories.

Attachment A is a summary of the 2005 action plan objectives.

Work is currently being done between the business units and external partners to update the 2005 Immigration Action Plan. HRM remains committed welcoming immigrants to our community by undertaking a series of specific actions to address service needs within our organization. The purpose of the updated Immigration Plan is to provide an overview of the outcomes, goals and objectives and measures for HRM for the next five years, to achieve success in integrating and retaining newcomers and creating a welcoming and friendly community for all.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications as a result of this information report. The updated plan's goals and objectives will be built into the various business plans and budgets of the participating Business Units.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No community engagement was required at this time.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Goals and Objectives Chart and Update

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by : Marion Currie, Coordinator Government Relations & External Affairs, 490-6422

Report Approved by: Chris Bryant, Acting Managing Director Government Relations & External Affairs, 490-3677

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**ATTACHMENT A: A Summary of the 2005 Action Plan Objectives**

	<b>Communications</b>	<b>Operations</b>	<b>Update as of Dec. 31, 2012</b>
<b>Short Term Objectives:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Host citizenship ceremonies</li> <li>- Provide welcome letters to newcomers from the Mayor and Councillors</li> <li>- Website improvements</li> <li>- Develop a "Newcomers' Guide to HRM"</li> <li>- Create an advisory group of staff and citizens to identify the challenges and needs of diverse communities</li> <li>- Utilize HRM access centres to link immigrants with existing services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fulfill HRM's diversity mandate to ensure employees represent the population they serve</li> <li>- Develop a list of potential interpreters within the HRM workforce</li> <li>- Establish a "Where in the World" section in the HRM News employee newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Since 1997, HRM has had a Community and Race Relations Policy</li> <li>- HRM Mayor and/or Councillors attend annual citizenship swearing in ceremonies and welcome immigrants on behalf of HRM</li> <li>- Various improvements have been made over the years to the HRM's website, however the current redesign project promises to provide better service to all citizens of HRM.</li> <li>- Currently there is a newcomers section and an immigration action plan section on Halifax.ca</li> <li>- There was an English version of the Newcomers' Guide developed in 2008</li> <li>- Culture has been promoted over the past eight years by way of the HRM newsletter, an on-line diversity calendar, a staff diversity working group, HRM's Advisory Committee on Accessibility, Diversity Week celebrations, and Diversity Fairs.</li> </ul>
<b>Medium Term Objectives:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with community partners to provide HRM service information in multiple languages</li> <li>- Develop additional versions of the "Newcomers' Guide to HRM" in Arabic, Mandarin, Spanish, Farsi and Russian and French</li> <li>- Increase diverse community representation on municipal committees and in policy &amp; event planning</li> <li>- Improve staff training in communications, in particular in providing plain language correspondence</li> <li>- Explore opportunities for the three levels of government to co-locate service centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhance cultural diversity training for customer service and front-line public facing employees</li> <li>- Encourage appropriate behavior and create staff performance accountabilities for recognizing diversity</li> <li>- Enhance emergency service protocols for dealing with diverse languages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The HRM Cultural Plan (2006), Community Engagement Strategy (2008), the Diversity Team Plan (2009) and the Economic Strategy (2011-16) all share complimentary objectives with the Immigration Action Plan.</li> <li>- Since 2009, HRM has held an annual Welcome BBQ and Potluck in partnership with ISIS. In addition, we partner with ISIS on an annual Supper Nova event and two annual bus tours.</li> <li>- HRM Citizen Contact Centres (311) now provide a wide variety of municipal information and services in over 150 languages using a telephone interpretation service.</li> <li>- The French version in 2010 and an Arabic version in 2011. In addition, HRM developed a Welcoming</li> </ul>

<p><b>Medium Term Objectives: con't</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaborate with Halifax Regional School Board to provide information to students on civics and by-laws</li> <li>- Promote culture in HRM</li> </ul>		<p>Rack Card distributed by the libraries, citizen contact centres, etc. All are available on-line at Halifax.ca.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HRM hired a Diversity Coordinator and has developed an HRM Diversity Strategy.</li> <li>- Halifax Public Libraries provide English as an Additional Language for adults at six different branches.</li> <li>- In 2011, HRM participated in the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination Tool Kit.</li> <li>- HRM offers a number of cultural competency and diversity training workshops to staff. The 2012/13 training calendar offered 33 courses on diversity training – with additional courses available upon request.</li> <li>- Halifax Regional Police implement mandatory Dimensions in Diversity and Bias Free Policing training sessions to their staff.</li> <li>- HRM is currently working with a number of community agencies to determine the feasibility of a federally funded Local Immigration Partnership, designed to strengthen local capacity to attract newcomers and improve integration outcomes, as indicated by enhanced economic, social, political, and civic participation.</li> </ul>
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<b>Outcome 1: HRM communication tools are developed to serve and represent diverse groups</b>		
<b>Goals:</b>	<b>Lead(s):</b>	<b>Indicators:</b>
1. HRM will complete its Branding Strategy	Corporate Communications	- Brand recognition and adoption
2. HRM will develop and utilize an immigrant "lens" when developing external communications in an effort to eliminate barriers	Corporate Communications	- % Barriers to HRM services eliminated and/or reduced
3. HRM will continue to make improvements to Halifax.ca in an effort to inform and engage diverse communities.  Promotional materials are representative of diversity in their design	Corporate Communications	- # promotional items requested in languages other than English
4. HRM will revise the youth portion of HRM's website in an effort to provide information to immigrant youth and assist with integration	Community & Recreation Services with Corporate Communications	- % Communications materials available in languages other than English
5. HRM will update the Newcomers Guide and make it available on Halifax.ca	GREA Corporate Communications GHP	- Increased satisfaction with user online experience
6. HRM will ensure the Newcomer Guide is made available in remaining four most common languages spoken by newcomers to HRM including: Mandarin, Spanish, Farsi, and Russian	GREA Corporate Communications GHP	- # Hits on HRM Youth page  - Increased satisfaction with HRM marketing and promotions
7. HRM will promote 311 as a tool for newcomers to get Municipal program & service information translated	Corporate Communications Community & Recreation Services	- # Translations provided by 311
8. HRM citizen contact centres and recreation facilities will be used to provide information to assist newcomers	Community & Recreation Services	- Satisfaction with translations provided by 311
9. HRM will create a French Solid Waste Householder Guide, and promote the Arabic and Mandarin versions	Solid Waste & Corporate Communications	
10. HRM will work with the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP) develop communications related to the attraction and retention of immigrants	GREA/GHP	- Business retention and expansion data specific to newcomer employment statistics in HRM

<b>Outcome 2: HRM programs and services support a welcoming community</b>		
<b>Goals:</b>	<b>Lead(s):</b>	<b>Indicators:</b>
11. HRM will work with immigrants and Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services (ISIS) to identify specific challenges faced by newcomers and improve municipal service provision	GREA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- # program and service reviews conducted to determine needs with respect to diverse community</li> <li>- Participation rate of newcomers as a % total of participants based on self-identification measures</li> <li>- # Applicants who self- identify through the application process for municipal committees and boards</li> <li>- Membership on Municipal committees and boards is representative of the population HRM serves</li> </ul>
12. HRM will continue to review areas which have the potential to impact demands for recreation and leisure infrastructure and resources on an ongoing basis. This review will include the need for culturally specific programs.	Community & Recreation Services	
13. HRM Community Recreation Services regards equal access to their programs and services as paramount. Outreach/Accessible/Inclusive Services is identified as a strategic outcome within the recreation blue print.	Community & Recreation Services	
14. Language interpretation services will be made available through a contract agency, at HRM's citizen contact centres	Community & Recreation Services	
15. HRM will increase efforts to involve diverse representation on municipal committees and boards in alignment with the Council approved Public Appointment Policy adopted in 2011	Regional Council/ City Clerk's Office	

<b>Outcome 3: HRM celebrates and enables a variety of cultural and creative opportunities</b>		
<b>Goals:</b>	<b>Lead(s):</b>	<b>Indicators:</b>
The Mayor or designate and Regional Councillors will participate in citizenship ceremonies and welcome newcomers to Halifax	Mayor's Office/Councillor Support Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase yearly attendance at events and cultural celebrations</li> <li>- % of event funding that supports historical/diverse events</li> <li>- Amount of money invested in cultural and creative opportunities in the</li> </ul>
HRM civic events and recreation are inclusive and welcoming HRM will host an annual welcome barbeque and potluck	Community & Recreation Services	
Through the HRM Community Grants Program and other funding mechanisms, the Municipality will support events that promote community history and diversity	Community & Recreation Services	
HRM will support artistic diversity, ethno-cultural, indigenous and culturally diverse communities including broad social-economic representation by:	Community & Recreation Services Planning & Infrastructure	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing the public art policy</li> <li>- Diversifying HRM's public art and events to represent various cultures</li> <li>- Increasing investment in a variety of cultural and creative opportunities in the Regional Centre</li> <li>- Updating HRM's Cultural Strategy</li> <li>- Developing Social Heritage Strategy</li> </ul>		<p>Regional Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social media trends around events and celebrations</li> <li>- Participant satisfaction with HRM events and cultural celebrations</li> </ul>
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**Outcome 4: HRM maximizes opportunities for increased stakeholder alignment, awareness, engagement and newcomer retention through partner organizations**

Goals:	Lead(s):	Indicators:
<p>HRM assist the Greater Halifax Partnership to provide programs and communications related to attraction and retention of immigrants such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connector Program</li> <li>- Immigration Employer Support Program</li> <li>- Coop and Internship Programs</li> <li>- Mayor's Welcoming Event for International Students</li> <li>- Branding Strategy</li> </ul>	<p>GREa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Business retention and expansion data specific to newcomer attraction and retention statistics in HRM</li> <li>- Newcomer issues are addressed during HRM strategic planning and embedded into the business planning process each year</li> <li>- Increased satisfaction with police services within culturally diverse communities</li> <li>- Improved perception of Halifax as a great place to live and work</li> </ul>
<p>HRM will support the development of coordinated strategies and work with community partners in an effort to bring immigrant settlement and integration into broader planning processes</p>	<p>GREa</p>	
<p>HRM's Partners in Policing Cultural Diversity Committee will advance and promote positive relations between HRM Partners in Policing and culturally diverse communities</p>	<p>HRP</p>	

<b>Outcome 5: HRM staff value diversity and are provided with the appropriate tools to serve diverse client groups</b>		
<b>Goals:</b>	<b>Lead(s):</b>	<b>Outcome Indicators:</b>
HRM will develop a Corporate Diversity Framework and Strategy inclusive of individual business unit goals and report to the CAO annually	Human Resources (HR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruitment strategy and HR policies &amp; practices actively support an increase in the number of employees from under-represented groups</li> <li>- Increased satisfaction with customer service</li> <li>- Increase in participation in activities/events/public meetings</li> <li>- Increased satisfaction with written communications by diverse employee groups</li> </ul>
The Halifax Regional Police Diversity Action Team will support initiatives within the Department to promote and encourage diversity in the workplace	HRP	
HRM will continue to provide training for customer service and front-line public facing employees in cultural competencies and valuing diversity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performance accountabilities for recognizing diversity are developed</li> <li>- Supervisors model appropriate behavior and hold staff accountable</li> </ul>	HR Halifax Regional Police (HRP)	
HRM will strive to employ a workforce that is representative of the population they serve	HR	
HRM will continue to utilize the Community Engagement Strategy when consulting with the public, to improve outreach to under-represented groups and those who experience barriers to participation	All Business Units	
HRM internal communications will continue to emphasise the value of a diverse workforce and the benefits of diversity in building a healthy workplace and community	Corporate Communications	
HRM will provide staff training to increase awareness and build capacity to communicate clearly and concisely with citizens through plain language correspondence	Corporate Communications	

**MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR**

**MESSAGE FROM THE CAO**

**HRM's Vision Statement:**

Halifax Regional Municipality is a vibrant, caring and connected community. Our community is built upon diverse cultures, respects the environment and our heritage, supports economic prosperity, and celebrates active citizenship.

**Values:**

- ❖ Communities working together
- ❖ Economic Prosperity as the backbone of a successful community
- ❖ Responsible active citizenship
- ❖ Social justice for all
- ❖ Protecting our natural environment
- ❖ Preserving our heritage
- ❖ Strength through our diversity
- ❖ Dedication to a learning culture

*(Council endorsed, October 3, 2000)*

**INTRODUCTION**

Although Municipalities do not provide direct immigrant support services, they are key players in the successful settlement, attraction, and retention of immigrants. This is in recognition of the fact that new immigrants are vital to local economic development strategies, cultural diversity and sustainable growth. They are also aware that in an environment where talented workers are highly mobile, they must be competitive in creating a high quality of life and welcoming environment for newcomers in acknowledgement of the value they bring to their new communities.

As home to 55% of Atlantic Canadian immigrants and 75% of immigrants to Nova Scotia, HRM has a significant vested interest in providing the most welcoming environment possible for newcomers. HRM's ability to maintain and build upon the immigrant population is fundamental to our region's economic, social and cultural success.

**BACKGROUND**

In May 2005, Halifax Regional Council adopted the following vision relative to immigration:

*"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.”*

in an effort to operationalize that vision, HRM drafted its first Immigration Action Plan which was adopted by Regional Council in September, 2005.

Several Municipal initiatives; including the Regional Plan, Economic Strategy, and Cultural Plan, identify immigration as playing a significant role in addressing our region’s economic, social and cultural realities in years to come. Halifax continues to work collaboratively with a variety of community organizations, the Province and within the Federal regulatory framework to further our vision of becoming a welcoming community where immigrants are supported.

## **DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS – HRM**

Today, approximately 413,000 people live in the Halifax Regional Municipality. Since 2000, Halifax has achieved strong population growth in comparison to its benchmark cities and the Canadian average. The Conference Board of Canada predicts a population of 423,000 by the year 2015.

Demographic changes indicate that attraction and retention of young people is critical to Halifax’s continued success. Population estimates indicate that since 2000, Halifax’s population growth has seen the second largest increase in the population 65+ and the largest decline in the population 0-14 compared to its benchmark cities. The changes in demographics weaken public finances, reduce diversity and increase workforce shortages.

The following trends and issues in the Labour Market were the main drivers for implementing HRM’s Human Resource Strategy in 2012:

- Nova Scotia has an aging population (the oldest in Canada)
- Over the next 20 years, working age population (18-64) will decline by 16% and there will be 100, 000 fewer potential workers
- 1 in 4 Nova Scotians will be 65 years or older

Further, the Labour and Workforce Development Department of Nova Scotia highlight the following workforce challenges:

- In the next 5 years we will be challenged to fill 56,000 jobs
- 3 out of 4 vacancies will be due to retirements
- 60% will require post-secondary education
- 88% will require at least high school
- NS will need engineers, technicians, skilled trades, IT skills, health care, sales/service, managers
- 243, 000 (38.4%) Nova Scotians (aged 16-65) do not have the literacy skills necessary for a knowledge-based economy.

Perhaps equally as alarming are the demographics of HRM's own workforce:

- 32.09% of all employees can retire with an unreduced pension on or before December 31, 2013
- HRM average employee age is 45.33
- 41.91% of all employees will be eligible to retire on or before December 31, 2013
- 33% of HRM's management are eligible to retire now
- 6.61% of all employees will be 65 years of age on or before December 31, 2013

In short, HRM is not just reflecting the provincial labour force challenges, but existing global conditions as well.

### **THE IMMIGRATION RATIONAL**

A focus on immigration is important to Municipalities because:

- immigrants provide valuable skills that may be in short supply, helping to reduce labour gaps and support local businesses;
- immigrants help bring diversity to a city and enrich the local culture, supporting the creative and cultural industries. (Halifax Index)

Across Canada, cities and communities are welcoming record numbers of permanent and temporary residents; approximately 558,000 in 2010. The majority of immigrants to Canada are in the skilled worker and business immigration categories. With specific advanced skills, they help fill shortages in the labour market. They also invest in our economy, and contribute to overall economic growth.

Municipal governments understand immigrants are central to local economic development objectives and; in a climate where talented workers are highly mobile, they must ensure a high quality of life and welcoming environment for newcomers. HRM's economic future is tied directly to our ability to successfully attract and retain new immigrants. As the workforce continues to age and Halifax approaches a wave of retirements, there is risk of a labour shortage and an urgent need to leverage human capital.

Although the Atlantic Provinces attract only a small share of the Nation's immigrant population, this share has been consistently growing over the past 10 years. In Halifax, immigrant attraction and retention continues to be a key determinant of economic growth and an important policy focus. Unfortunately, Halifax continues to fall behind other Canadian cities of similar size related to immigrant attraction and retention. Declining international and intra-provincial migration indicate Halifax's ability to attract new residents has slipped compared to regional cities. (Halifax Index)

Nova Scotia; and Halifax in particular, is a hotspot for international students as the universities attract about 2,000 new international students every year, bringing the Halifax's inflows to levels of much larger cities such as Calgary and Edmonton, and approaching the levels of Ottawa-Gatineau. The issue for Nova Scotia (and Halifax by proxy) is a lack of retention, convincing the students (and other immigrants) who come to the province to stay after they receive their education. Nova Scotia historically dominates foreign student entries (56% of entries to Atlantic Canada were in Nova Scotia between 2005 and 2009) yet falls short on converting these students to permanent residents (only 35% of conversions occurred in Nova Scotia in the same period). So; although Halifax has the largest population of international students but the region's lowest retention rate, Halifax's is missing out on a significant immigration opportunity. (Halifax Index)

## **THE MUNICIPAL ROLE**

Although municipalities are neither mandated nor funded to recruit or retain immigrants, local governments play a key role in helping newcomers settle into Canadian life. In many respects, municipal governments are at the nation's forefront when it comes to immigrant settlement. Therefore it is important to consider how municipal services meet the needs of a diverse community.

As a result, municipalities are integrating newcomer needs into their budgets and business plans, with a focus on building and maintaining welcoming communities. Municipalities can consider the following services when building a welcoming community:

- Employment opportunities
- Affordable and suitable housing
- Positive attitudes towards immigrants, cultural diversity, and the presence of newcomers in the community
- Newcomer service agencies that can successfully meet the needs of newcomers
- Municipal programs and services sensitive to newcomer needs
- Available and accessible public transit
- Social engagement opportunities
- Accessible public spaces and recreation opportunities
- Public safety

## **HRM'S NEWCOMER ACTION PLAN**

In order to increase the number of individuals and families who move into our region and stay here, we must create a welcoming community. Below is the list of initiatives Halifax has identified to continue to move the Municipality towards being welcoming to newcomers. This plan was developed with input from business, government, non-profit organizations, immigrant

settlement organizations and newcomers themselves. Several HRM strategies, including the Regional Plan, Economic Strategy and Cultural Plan, helped to shape the actions outlined below.

## **CONCLUSION**

Considering all opportunities currently available and those which can be created, we commit to enhancing the experiences of immigrants in our community by undertaking a series of specific actions to address service needs within our organization. The purpose of this action plan is to provide an overview of the outcomes, goals and objectives and measures for HRM between 2013 and 2018, to achieve success in integrating and retaining newcomers and creating a welcoming and friendly community for all.

HRM is committed to consulting with stakeholders on an ongoing basis, reviewing progress and determining whether the goals and objectives remain relevant on an annual basis. Status updates back to Regional Council will be through reports to the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee of Council.

## **REFERENCES:**

1. Federation of Canadian Municipalities – Starting on Solid Ground: The Municipal Role in Immigration Settlement – 2011
2. A Place for Everyone: A Formative Evaluation of the Halifax Regional Municipality Immigration Action Plan. A report for the Atlantic Metropolis Centre for Excellence by Karin Kronstal, January 2010
3. Conference Board of Canada
4. GHP Halifax Index, 2012 & 2013
5. Greater Halifax Partnership Halifax Region Immigration Strategy July 27, 2005