



P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Item No. 5**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**August 5, 2014**

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed

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Councillor Lorelei Nicoll, Chair  
Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee

**DATE:** July 25, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Information Reports - Economic Strategy Year End Update and The Report of  
the Commission on Building Our New Economy

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#### **INFORMATION REPORT**

##### **ORIGIN**

Motion passed at the July 24, 2014 meeting of the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee forwarding information reports to Regional Council.

##### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Section 21 of the Halifax Charter regarding Standing, Special, and Advisory Committees.

The Committee's Terms of Reference – Section 3.2 Oversight of HRM's Economic Plan, Economic Prosperity Indicators and Immigration Action Plan.

**BACKGROUND/ DISCUSSION**

At the July 24, 2014 meeting of the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee, a report providing a year end update on the Economic Strategy was submitted for the Committee's review with a recommendation that it be forward to Regional Council for information. Also on the agenda of this meeting was an information report regarding the final report by the Government of Nova Scotia's Commission on Building Our New Economy. The Committee felt that since the reports were interrelated, they should be forwarded together to Regional Council for Council's information.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Not applicable with this report.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: June 6, 2014 staff report entitled, Economic Strategy Year End Update

Attachment 2: June 3, 2014 staff information report entitle, Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians – The Report of the Commission on Building Our New Economy

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant

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# HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Item No.**  
**Community Planning and Economic Development Committee**  
**June 12, 2014**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed

Richard Butts, Chief Administrative Office

**DATE:** 6 June 2014

**SUBJECT:** Economic Strategy Year End Update

## ORIGIN

March 22, 2011: MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Streach that Halifax Regional Council endorse the 2011-2016 Economic Strategy for Halifax Regional Municipality. Motion put and passed.

June 25, 2013: MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Karsten that Halifax Regional Council endorse the proposed updates to the actions under the 2011-2016 Economic Strategy as outlined in the May 24, 2013 staff report.

## LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter 2008, c. 39, s. 1. permits the Municipality to undertake a variety of economic development activities.

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Community Planning and Economic Development committee receive this report and forward to Regional Council for information.

## BACKGROUND

### Economic Development

Economic development is a policy intervention which aims to increase the economic and social well-being of people. Actions to promote economic growth include development or enhancement of human capital, infrastructure, trade, competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety, literacy and other initiatives.

Halifax can support economic development by facilitating a climate for growth, direct support of initiatives to promote growth, or through collaboration with other organizations promoting economic growth.

The Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP) presented to the Community Planning and Economic Development committee (CPED) in February 2013 three fundamental economic growth objectives: (1) to grow the population; (2) to grow the number of good jobs; and (3) to grow the commercial tax base. Halifax's economic development strategy seeks to marshal the municipality's resources and external resources to achieve those three objectives.

### Economic Strategy

In March 2011, Regional Council endorsed a new Economic Strategy for 2011-2016. In February 2013, the Municipal Auditor General's report Economic Development through Partnerships – A Performance Evaluation suggested that Halifax's economic development support work needed more focus. The municipality and GHP reviewed the strategy and significantly tightened up the strategy implementation activities. The updated Strategy can be read [here](#).

### Economic Highlights - 2013

- The Halifax Index was released at the annual State of the Economy event on May 22, 2014, and provides a thorough picture of the Halifax economy and economic progress over the past year.
- 2013 was a year of moderate but improved growth for the Halifax economy, supported by significant apartment construction and major project activity, but slowed by disrupted natural gas exports and softness in the labour and housing markets.
- GDP grew by 1.9% to \$18.1 billion (2007 chained dollars) keeping pace with the national average.
- After a record and exceptional 2012 the value of building permits in 2013 dropped to \$641 million from \$922 million.
- Almost exclusively full-time employment gains reversed the post-recession trend toward part-time employment growth but relatively faster growth in the labour force resulted in a slightly increased unemployment rate.
- Youth employment declined in 2013 though full-time employment among youth made strong gains.
- Additional highlights of changes in population, employment and commercial tax base changes from 2012 to 2013 are noted below.



|                                |  | 2012          | 2013          | % Change | Canada<br>2013 | Canada<br>%<br>Change<br>Over<br>2012 |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------|---------------|----------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Population</b>              | Population                             | 406,903       | 408,702       | + 0.4    | 35,105,086     | +1.2                                  |
| <b>Employment</b>              |  |               |               |          |                |                                       |
|                                | Employment<br>(thousands)              | 225.1         | 227.3         | + 1.0    | 17,729.6       | +1.3                                  |
|                                | Full time<br>employment<br>(thousands) | 182.5         | 184.1         | + 0.9    | 14,385.3       | +1.2                                  |
|                                | Unemployment rate                      | 6.1%          | 6.6%          | + 0.5    | 7.1%           | -0.2                                  |
|                                | Participation rate                     | 69.8%         | 70.0 %        | + 0.2    | 66.5%          | -0.2                                  |
|                                | Youth<br>unemployment rate             | 12.6%         | 15.3%         | +2.7     | 13.7%          | -0.7                                  |
| <b>Commercial<br/>tax base</b> | Commercial tax<br>base                 | \$6.2 billion | \$6.6 billion | + 6.4    |                |                                       |

## DISCUSSION

### Economic Strategy Implementation

Attachment 1 provides Status Updates on the 48 Actions planned for Years 3-5 to achieve the 5 goals of the Economic Strategy.

- Regional Centre – Build a vibrant and attractive Regional Centre that attracts \$1.5B of private investment and 8,000 more residents by 2016
- Business Climate – Promote a business climate that drives and sustains growth by improving competitiveness and by leveraging our strengths
- Talent – Create a welcoming community where the world's talent can find great opportunities, engaged employers and resources for advancement
- International Brand – Create a unique international city brand for Halifax.
- Maximize Growth Opportunities – Capitalize on our best opportunities for economic growth.

In the period under review work has continued on the various activities in the strategy.

Noteworthy work includes:

- Regional Centre
  - Halifax Regional Council endorsed a project list and authorized staff to negotiate with the federal and provincial governments on a \$50m intergovernmental capital improvement fund.
  - The province proclaimed Bill 83 allowing Density Bonusing and Site Plan Approval.
  - A plan for the demolition and redevelopment of the Cogswell Lands was completed and is under review.
- Business Climate
  - GHP continues to market and promote Halifax as a location of choice for businesses.
  - Over the 2013/2014 year GHP's Smart Business Business Retention and Expansion program saw GHP conduct 200 business retention visits and almost 450 referrals to partner organizations. The program enabled 11 retentions, 21 expansions and 76+ jobs created or retained.

- Talent
  - The African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office hosted 4 seasonal employment information workshops for African Nova Scotian Youth.
  - The Connector program, a referral process that helps immigrants, international students and young and emerging talent build a professional network, and connect with job opportunities, saw the following success in 2013/2014:
    - 121 new business leader Connectors
    - 101 Immigrant participants
    - 283 young emerging talent participants (104 YETs, 103 International Students and 76 YET Speed Interview participants)
    - 185 participants finding jobs since April 1st (Significant increase this quarter as a result of surveying past participants)
- International Brand
  - Extensive public engagement and stakeholder consultation continued on the development of a new brand for HRM.
- Maximize Growth Opportunities
  - Round one of GHP's Business Leaders' Roundtable Program recently wrapped up with a total of 15 business leaders in two groups meeting regularly to support one another in expanding export sales and commercializing innovative products or processes.
  - The brand for the new Halifax Convention Centre and the 16 events booked into the new facility were announced in January.
  - GHP substantially completed a Regional and Head Office attraction and retention strategy. The final report was released on April 14th. Go to:
    - Final Report: <http://bit.ly/1cKc8v>
    - Infographic: <http://bit.ly/1f21UKY>
    - HRO Value Proposition: <http://bit.ly/Pr7M4t>
  - GHP continues to have ongoing collaboration with Nova Scotia Business Incorporated (NSBI) and other partners to attract and retain business investment. This collaboration saw:
    - 38 prospect companies shortlist Halifax for their investment.
    - 6 Companies who have successfully opened an operation and hired at least 1 employee in Halifax.

2014 also saw the release of the report of the Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy led by Ray Ivany. The report, called Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians, articulated the primary challenges facing the Nova Scotia economy, identified goals that Nova Scotia should aspire to over the next ten years and spoke to "game changers" or changes needed in order to work differently than we have in the past to achieve these goals. Staff are reviewing the best approach for Halifax to take to help make Nova Scotia a more economically successful and sustainable province.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report updates activities undertaken by HRM staff and GHP to implement the Economic Strategy and by GHP to fulfill the requirements of its Service Level Agreement. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

There was no community engagement in the preparation of this report.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications to this report.

**ALTERNATIVES**

1. The Community Planning and Economic Development committee may request changes to the type of information included in the report.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – A Greater Halifax – Economic Strategy 2011-2016: Actions for 2013 to 2016 – 2013/2014 Update – Q4

Attachment 2 - Smart Business Report: April 2013 – March 2014

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> 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: Maggie MacDonald, Senior Advisor Economic Policy and Development, 490-1742

Original Signed

Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Maggie MacDonald, Senior Advisor Economic Policy and Development, 490-1742

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# AGREATERHalifax

Economic Strategy 2011-2016

## ACTIONS FOR 2013 to 2016

### Vision

As the economic engine for the region, Halifax is a truly international city where people learn, work, easily start and grow a business, capitalize on ideas and live within a diverse, vibrant, sustainable community. Our vision represents a call to action. It defines our economic future. It defines the future of our city, an international city, a green city, a blue city, a proud and well-known city, a place where business thrives and a place where people want to live. This is our vision. This is Halifax.

### Our success measures:

Grow the business tax base of Halifax — retention and expansion of existing business and attraction of new business is essential for fiscal growth in HRM.

Grow employment and income levels in Halifax — if we create good jobs at a livable wage, people will move and stay here.

Grow the population of Halifax — growth in population and households is critical to the future growth and prosperity of the whole region.

### Measuring Outcomes:

The Partnership will use the % growth of the previous years from its benchmark cities to determine its targets for the upcoming year. Further, to limit the role of outliers (high growth or low growth) years, the Partnership will use the median (middle) value from its 5 benchmark cities to determine the target for the upcoming year. These results will be tracked in the Halifax Index, the Partnership's annual economic and community measurement tool, each year and the results will be presented at its annual State of the Economy Conference.

| GOALS (5) | OBJECTIVES (17)   | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)   | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2   |
|-----------|---|---|---|
|           | Direct and oversee a pro-development policy environment within the Regional Centre. | 1. Continue to review HRM's regulatory processes and development fees to make private land development inside the Regional Centre more attractive.                  | Consultation and amendments to improve processes regulated by the Subdivision By-law will be undertaken in 2014. An expedited process for small projects within the HRM by Design area downtown will be proposed as part of the plan's 5 year review. Development and construction permit fees to be reviewed and adjusted based on GHP findings/Regional Council direction. Implementation of enhanced fee payment options to enable acceptance of credit cards. |
|           |   | 2. Provide density bonuses and site plan approvals as appropriate for increasing density in the Regional Centre.  | Bill 83 was proclaimed expanding the Halifax Regional Municipality authority to use bonus zoning and site plan approvals.   |
|           |   | 3. Redesign the development approvals process, including consultation, to decrease limitations to urban development and to ensure efficient and effective feedback. | Public consultation policy for planning applications to be reviewed and recommendations for change to be provided to Council. Development approval process improvements to be determined through Centre Plan exercise.  |
|           |   | 1. Raise awareness of the availability of parking in the regional centre in alignment with the HRM Parking Strategy.  | Currently researching capability of technology to provide feedback on availability and improve the functionality of paid on-street parking as part of the Regional Parking Strategy Update.<br>A number of street signs have been installed to provide better wayfinding to major off-street parking lots.  |



| GOALS (5)   | OBJECTIVES (17)   | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)   | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p><b>REGIONAL CENTRE</b><br/>Build a vibrant and attractive Regional Centre that attracts \$1.5B of private investment and 8,000 more residents by 2016.</p> | <p>Further the livability and attractiveness of our urban core.</p> | <p>2. Develop a 5 year intergovernmental capital improvement campaign to repair and enhance the public realm in the Urban Core and establish an ongoing dedicated strategic urban reserve fund for Urban Core beautification &amp; infrastructure improvements.</p> | <p>On February 11, 2014, Halifax Regional Council voted to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Endorse public realm improvement project list for eligibility under the 5 Year, \$50 Million Capital Improvement Campaign, as described in the Project Identification and evaluation section of the January 23, 2014 supplementary staff report;</li> <li>2. Commit to a \$50 million program, contingent upon other levels of government funding with one third municipal contribution of \$17 million spread evenly over the five years, beginning with \$3.4 million in fiscal year 20 14/15;</li> <li>3. Authorize staff to enter into negotiations with the federal and provincial governments on partnership agreements and funding of the public realm improvements identified in the report; and</li> <li>4. Endorse the creation of a strategic urban reserve to fund the on-going maintenance and renewal of the projects proposed in the 5-year public realm improvement campaign and similar future projects, as well as urban core beautification, pole free area, public art and other streetscape improvements; and direct staff to bring a reserve fund business case as outlined in the staff report no later than spring 2015.</li> </ol> |
|   |   | <p>3. Assess HRM's role in district heating and cooling.</p>  | <p>The district heating and cooling proponent withdrew the proposal and the file is no longer active.</p>   |
|   |   | <p>4. Incorporate into the Cogswell redevelopment plan the economic strategy regional centre objectives.</p>  | <p>A plan and strategy for the demolition and redevelopment of the Cogswell Lands has been completed and is under review by Regional Council. In congruence with the HRM Economic Strategy, the plan provides for mixed use residential and commercial development on 6 acres of surplus lands and expects to have a direct impact on redevelopment of another 6 acres of underutilized property. Providing people an attractive place to live and work in a compact walkable neighbourhood at the north end of downtown is directly in line with strengthening the downtown the HRMES. District energy is part of the plan. Intermodal transportation options are a key element within the Cogswell Lands Plan. Placing lands on the market for redevelopment is a strong signal to developers around HRM's intention to carry through on its economic objectives for the Regional Centre.</p>   |
|   |   | <p>5. Work with federal and provincial government to explore development opportunities for vacant public and private lands in the regional centre for cultural institutions, public spaces and private mixed uses.</p>  | <p>Past Successes: HRM/NSTIR Joint Public Lands Plan and subsequent land exchanges (former QEH Site and Central Library Site)<br/>Advancing: Nova Center, Cogswell Interchange Lands<br/>Future Discussion: Shannon Park</p>  |
|   |   | <p>1. Implement the active transportation plan with a priority placed on Regional Centre bike lanes.</p>  | <p>Five-year update of Active Transportation Plan will be presented to Regional Council in June<br/>Engineering design underway for four overpass connections to the Regional Centre.<br/>Windsor Street bike lane opened in October and Hollis Street will open in Spring 2014.<br/>Bike fix-it stations installed at ferry terminals and two other locations.<br/>Upgrades to Dartmouth Ferry Terminal include better bike access and parking.<br/>2014-15 budget includes \$3.0 million for new bike lanes and greenways and \$2.5 million for new sidewalks</p>   |

| GOALS (5)  | OBJECTIVES (17)  | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)   | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2   |
|--|--|---|---|
|  | Reinvent the current approach to mobility in the Regional Centre.                                  | 2. Create a new transportation model that conveniently connects goods with their destinations while not interfering with residents' safe enjoyment of the Urban Core.   | Five year review of Regional Plan and Bedford/Mainland North corridor studies give further definition to road network plan. Development of Complete Streets plan underway. Working with Transport Canada on a truck mapping exercise.   |
|  |  | 3. Ensure the 5 year strategic framework for transit supports growth in the Regional Centre.  | Proposal to expand the scope of work for the Metro Transit Five Year Service Plan approved by Council in January of 2014. System wide review of transit network is currently underway. It is anticipated that a draft plan will be available for consultation in the Fall of 2014. Proposal to expand the scope of work for the Metro Transit Five Year Service Plan approved by Council in January of 2014. System wide review of transit network is currently underway. It is anticipated that a draft plan will be available for consultation in the Fall of 2014.   |
|  | Celebrate and enable a rich variety of cultural and creative opportunities in the Regional Centre. | 1. Enable public investment for cultural institutions and public gathering spaces, informed by municipal cultural investment study being undertaken and HRM's Regional Plan review.   | HRM has recently awarded public art tenders for the Canada Games Centre and Dartmouth Bridge Transit Terminal, and work is underway. The Special Arts and Culture Committee recommendations related to investment in professional arts were assessed along with the Kelly Hill Strategies study regarding HRM's investment in art and culture as compared for similar sized cities. Resulting staff recommendations were provided to Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee in March, resulting in additional funding of \$300,000 being allocated in the 2014/15 approved budget. The process and administrative order required to disperse the funds will be presented to Regional Council early in the 2014 fiscal year. |
| 2. Make available regional centre municipal public spaces for public art, cultural and educational programs. |  | HRM public spaces in the Regional Centre are regularly available for programming and public art. Public art and monuments are located along both the Halifax and Dartmouth waterfronts and at various other locations within the Regional Centre such as Grand Parade and Granville Mall. Those locations are also frequently used for cultural and civic event programming such as Nocturne, Canada Day, Moosehead celebration, Natal Day, etc |   |
| 3. Create an inventory of cultural institutions, events and programs in the Regional Centre.                 |  | The creation of the overall inventory of cultural institutions, events and programs is part of the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan of the Regional Plan.   |   |
|  |  | 1. Identify opportunities to streamline regulatory requirements or processes through work with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on the Access to Business project.   | HRM continues to work with the province on an Access to Business Restaurant and Accommodations bundle. Through a series of workshops, a variety of opportunities for streamlining processes have been identified. Next steps include detailed evaluation of these opportunities and definition of requirements to proceed.  |



| GOALS (5) | OBJECTIVES (17)  | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)  | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2  |
|-----------|--|--|--|
|           | Reduce regulatory, tax and policy issues that can inhibit development and investment.  | 2. Benchmark development charges, fees and timelines against those in other comparable jurisdictions.  | Near to final report delivered to HRM for internal review. Project included detailed analysis of development fees and timelines as well as customizable tools for more robust usage by HRM.<br>February 27th - Met with HRM staff to discuss and provide a detailed walkthrough of project findings and analytical uses of the report.   |
|           |  | 3. Continue to research and benchmark HRM's tax competitiveness against other municipalities.  | <p>On a motion of the Audit &amp; Finance Standing Committee, HRM Finance is reviewing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• programs/initiatives other municipalities have to assist small businesses with the tax burden;</li> <li>• whether the Province would be willing to share the required data to identify small businesses in HRM; and</li> <li>• how the assessment averaging proposal could be focused on small business.</li> </ul> <p>On a motion from Regional Council, HRM finance is, with Property Valuations Services Corporation, analyzing and reviewing "why condominium buildings generally have a higher assessment compared to apartment buildings equal in size, quality and virtually similar in all other factors. To consider methods used in other Canadian municipalities to address this issue, including providing a reduced tax rate and/or other incentives to increase density."</p> <p>Work with the City of Calgary on residential benchmarking is on-going. The latest information on 2012 taxes is on the HRM website at: <a href="http://www.halifax.ca/revenue/tax/benchmark/Residential.html">http://www.halifax.ca/revenue/tax/benchmark/Residential.html</a>.</p> <p>HRM finance is working with StatCan to establish a new standard geography with StatCan to reflect the urban settlement boundary (as per the Regional Plan). This will help us to benchmark our urban growth over time, by facilitating (and reducing errors in) the use of StatCan data.</p> |
|           | Create a service oriented culture within HRM that supports the business community's need for competitiveness, growth and responsiveness. | 1. Work with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations to include some transactions with HRM through the Access to Business portal.  | HRM continues to work with the province on an Access to Business Restaurant and Accommodations bundle. Through a series of workshops, a variety of opportunities for streamlining processes have been identified. Next steps include detailed evaluation of these opportunities and definition of requirements to proceed.   |
|           |  | 2. Leverage GHP's Business Retention and Expansion Program to collect input from businesses from various sources and formalize a feedback mechanism to HRM in order to inform business planning and decision making as recommended in the Auditor General's report on Economic Development through Partnerships. | GHP sits as a member of the newly created SNSMR Industry Advisory Group that will provide their Restaurant and Accommodations Project team with advice and insight into the challenges and potential improvements required to focus on bundling services to make it easier to start and operate this type of business – without having to understand which government or department is responsible for each program or service. The first meeting was held January 16, 2014.   |

| GOALS (5)   | OBJECTIVES (17)   | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)  | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p><b>BUSINESS CLIMATE</b><br/>Promote a business climate that drives and sustains growth by improving competitiveness and by leveraging our strengths.</p> |   | <p>3. Review and analyse available data (including BRE data, general research) to understand which municipal service delivery issues are the most important to business.</p> | <p>SmartBusiness Report April 2013 to March 2014 attached.</p>  |
|   | <p>Develop a responsive, safe, integrated regional transportation system.</p>   | <p>1. Investigate models, complete a best practices review and define the business case for a Regional Transportation Authority.</p>   | <p>The Strategic Joint Regional Transportation Committee undertook stakeholder survey and best practices review and determined that no obvious benefit exists at this time to warrant a change in transportation governance.</p>  |
|   | <p>Focus on quality of place including the need for civic engagement, public investment and initiatives to increase social capital.</p> | <p>1. Consult with community and business stakeholders and develop a long term (20 year) strategic approach to infrastructure investment.</p>                                | <p>Capital planning cycle has been increased from 5 year cycle to a 10 year cycle. Asset management program will develop 20 year recapitalization/renewal plans. This base information will inform a longer term strategic approach.</p>  |
|   |   | <p>2. Continue to track "Quality of Place" measurements in the Halifax Index.</p>  | <p>Included in the presentation of the 2nd Halifax Index at the State of the Economy Conference in May 2013. Details and copies can be found at <a href="http://www.greaterhalifax.com/en/agh_home/halifax-index/default.aspx">http://www.greaterhalifax.com/en/agh_home/halifax-index/default.aspx</a> Preliminary work has begun on the third Index, set for release in May 2014.</p> |
|   | <p>Halifax is recognized internationally for its clean and healthy environment.</p>   | <p>1. Undertake actions in support of HRM's priority to be a leader in environment and sustainability initiatives.</p>   | <p>Solar City is tracking to a 500 – 600 home 2 year project. Community Energy Plan revision will be complete in 2014 / 15, partnering with QUEST and Halifax Chamber on project. \$975,000 of Energy Projects approved in 2014 / 2015 Project Budget.</p>  |



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|-----------|--|--|---|
|           | <p>Increase the engagement and active support of the private sector in the economic growth of Halifax.</p> | <p>1. Develop and launch a campaign to raise awareness and increase engagement of the business community in the economic growth priorities of Halifax.</p>         | <p>The Partnerships markets and promotes Halifax as a location of choice for business by raising local confidence and both the national and international profile of the Halifax region. This is accomplished through online, print, radio, media, and events promoting HRM as an attractive community to live, work and conduct business. This year (compared to Year-End 2012-13 results):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 29% increase in web and social media results:</li> <li>&gt;31% increase in engaged users for Twitter,</li> <li>&gt;39% increase in engaged users for Facebook,</li> <li>&gt;12% increase in LinkedIn Members</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, the Partnership has defined and leads the implementation of the Mayor's Celebrate Business Program. The following are highlights of activities between April 1 and March 30:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Met with IBM</li> <li>- Received a thorough tour of the airport and related businesses (IMP, ALT Hotel, Jazz Aviation, Gateway Facilities and HSIA)</li> <li>- Met with senior company representatives who are either interested in doing business here or are already doing business in Halifax. (These cannot be disclosed due to the confidential nature of these meetings and relationships.)</li> <li>- Met with delegates from in-bound trade missions through the Halifax Gateway Council.</li> <li>- Toured CARGOLINK as a follow up to the Offshore Europe/Aberdeen visit (WECP)</li> <li>- Spoke at Partnership's President's Breakfast held in December</li> <li>- Met with senior company representatives from Citco</li> <li>- Received a tour of Ultra Electronics facility and had a working lunch with managers and employees.</li> <li>- Met with start-up companies at the Innovacorp incubator and toured the facilities.</li> <li>- The Mayor spoke at GHP's DefineHfx open house Brand session.</li> </ul> |
|           |  | <p>2. Increase private sector investment in economic growth and ensure strong representation and participation in the implementation of the Economic Strategy.</p> | <p>90% of the private sector investors renewed their investment. There are currently 117 private sector organizations investing in the Greater Halifax Partnership.</p> <p>New Investors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moore Executive Suites/Oceanstone Inn</li> <li>• Lois Lane PR</li> <li>• Journeyman Film</li> <li>• Jazz Aviation</li> <li>• Shell Canada</li> <li>• IBM Canada</li> <li>• Cisco Systems</li> </ul>  |

| GOALS (5)   | OBJECTIVES (17)  | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)   | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p><b>TALENT</b><br/>Create a welcoming community where the world's talent can find</p> |  | <p>1. Advocate for Federal and Provincial labour market programming that aligns with the needs of the Halifax business community.</p>   | <p>The Partnership sits as a member of the Province's Workforce of the Future Table that is a collaboration of public and private stakeholders focused on understanding the priorities of stakeholders and that linkages are in place to ensure we have a workforce that will meet the economic opportunities we currently have and expect to have in the coming years</p> <p>Between March 1 and April 30th, we have provided input into the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- April 27: Federal Immigration Roundtable-Changes to the Skilled Worker Program</li> <li>- September 4: Provincial Roundtable-Changes to the funding of the Labour Market Agreement</li> <li>- October 17 -18: Co-sponsored the Spiritual Diversity Conference</li> <li>- October 21-22: Participated in the Conference Board of Canada's Leaders Roundtable on Immigration - Immigrant Entrepreneurship</li> <li>- February 27: Facilitated session for the Annual CYBF Canada Youth Business Foundation Roundtable on Action Youth Entrepreneurship Halifax</li> <li>- March 20: Presented at the Summit on Youth in the Nova Scotia Economy</li> </ul> <p>The Partnership also sits as a member of LIP (Local Immigrant Partnership) Advisory Council</p>  |
|   | <p>Maximize opportunities for increased alignment, awareness and engagement of the business community in the implementation of the Province's workforce strategy (JobsHERE).</p> | <p>2. Help businesses achieve best practices in employee recruitment and retention by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- connecting the business community to labour market information and human resource management support, and</li> <li>- increasing business community's participation in labour market initiatives to attract and retain young professionals and international skilled workers.</li> </ul> | <p>Through its Business Retention and Expansion Program, the Partnership provides information to clients regarding best practices in employee recruitment and retention. One example of support is connecting clients to the Workforce Development resources available on the business.novascotia.ca website. Examples include:</p> <p>NS HR Toolkit - provides valuable human resource information, downloadable tools and templates, and links to programs and resources to support managers with their human resource needs.</p> <p>SkillsonlineNS - This tool promotes a practice of learning in the workplace, providing quick and easy access to thousands of online courses suitable to staff at every level of the organizations.</p> <p>Welcoming Workplaces - supports businesses be more inclusive and welcoming. The workbook includes a business diversity self-assessment, practical advice and strategies and ready-to-use forms and templates to help employers make diversity a part of their strategic business goals.</p> <p>The Partnership has presented the benefits of being a Connector to various community organizations, universities, government departments, etc. Connector Program results for 2013-14 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>121 new business leader Connectors</li> <li>101 Immigrant participants (97 + 4 speed interviews participants)</li> <li>283 young emerging talent participants (104 YETs, 103 International Students and 76 YET Speed Interview participants)</li> <li>185 participants finding jobs since April 1st (Significant increase this quarter as a result of surveying past participants)</li> </ul> <p>Program Totals to March 31st:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1022 Participants (includes speed interviews)</li> <li>641 business leaders are Connectors</li> <li>447 participants have found jobs</li> </ul> |

| GOALS (5)   | OBJECTIVES (17)   | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)   | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>great opportunities, engaged employers and resources for career advancement.</p>           |   | <p>3. Increase the engagement of the business community to provide information and input on current and future labour market needs to partners to ensure programs respond to current business needs.</p>  | <p>See #1 above -- included in the Partnership's contribution to the Province's Workforce Table of the Future.</p>  |
|   | <p>Build a welcoming and inclusive environment for underrepresented groups.</p> | <p>1. Review HRM policies, strategies, facilities and programs to ensure they are inclusive of diverse communities.</p>   | <p>Work will continue in 14/15.</p>   |
|   |   | <p>2. To identify workforce matters of common interest with the First Nations community in HRM to maximize employment outcomes. The work will begin through establishing a partnership with the Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre and focus on opportunities to increase employment representation for Aboriginal people.</p> | <p>Work continues with the community. Next meeting is scheduled for the end of April 2014.</p>  |
|   |   | <p>3. Create a function within HRM that will work to improve the quality and level of service to residents and communities of African descent as it relates to employment.</p>  | <p>Hosted 4 seasonal employment information workshops for African Nova Scotian Youth. Participants who attended were in high school and attending post-secondary institutions. Evaluation was very positive. The follow via the African Nova Scotian webpage also generated post event participation.<br/>ANSAIO and GHP-CED are working on a community benefits document. This will be an initiative out of the Statement of Outcomes and Principles agreement<br/>Piloted a collaboration with NSCC's African Nova Scotian Student Success Coordinator to facilitate exposure of African Nova Scotian students who are seeking a work term to various Business Units in HRM. Success indicators: Indication of interest through submission of resumes – high; number of students who are able to be placed in a business. This can be measured at a later date.<br/>HRM operational processes currently support engagement across Business Units and engagement within HRM's African Nova Scotian communities</p> |
|   |   | <p>4. Explore new opportunities for underrepresented groups, like youth, to link to employment opportunities.</p>   | <p>Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration doing workshops with African Nova Scotian Youth. HRM continuing its internship program into 14/15.</p>  |
| <p>HRM will become an "Employer of Choice" serving as a model for the business community.</p> | <p>5. Implement the HRM People Plan.</p>  | <p>In process. In 14/15 Human Resources will update the Plan and prioritize deliverables based on business goals and priorities.</p>  |   |



| GOALS (5)   | OBJECTIVES (17)   | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)   | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>INTERNATIONAL BRAND</b><br>Create a unique international city brand for Halifax. | Create a unique international city brand for Halifax that reflects our best qualities and what we aspire to be. | 1. Develop a Brand Strategy and Implementation Plan.  | <p>On November 26, 2013 - Halifax Regional Council unanimously passed the motion to award the HRM Rebranding Project to the successful proponent Revolve Branding Inc. GHP co-lead the project with HRM. Public engagement sessions, stakeholder sessions, and telephone interviews (residents and non-residents) were conducted from December 2013 to March 2014.</p> <p>On April 15, 2014 - Regional Council approved the brand strategy for the Halifax region, giving staff the green light to start implementing the strategy and to encourage people to live and promote the brand promise to "Be Bold."</p> |
|   |   | 2. Ensure necessary buy-in and adoption from citizens, the business community and key organizations that will have a role in the brand strategy implementation.   | 2014 - ongoing   |
|   | Move Halifax from Good to Great -- Live the brand!  | 3. Implement the Brand Strategy that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides clear and consistent messages to a local, national and international marketplace;</li> <li>- Supports trade, investment and labour market development;</li> <li>- Increases the number of businesses actively seeking customers in international markets;</li> <li>- Builds business and citizen confidence locally; and,</li> <li>- Inspires a culture that guarantees Halifax's delivery of an exceptional experience.</li> </ul> | 2014 - ongoing   |
|   | Support and validate the implementation of the economic strategy through an enhanced research capacity.         | 1. Implement the Partnership's BRE Program focused on connecting Halifax businesses to the resources and services they need to be more competitive, at home, across the country and internationally.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Visitations: 200</li> <li>• Retentions: 11</li> <li>• Expansions: 21</li> <li>• Referrals: 449</li> <li>• Jobs Created: 76+</li> </ul> <p>(SmartBusiness Year-End Report for the period April 1 to March 31 is attached).</p> <p>Round one of GHP's Business Leaders' Roundtable Program recently wrapped up with a total of 15 business leaders in two groups meeting regularly to support one another in expanding export sales and commercializing innovative products or processes.</p>  |



| GOALS (5)                                   | OBJECTIVES (17) | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)  | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2  |
|---|-----------------|--|--|
| <p><b>MAXIMIZE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> |                 | <p>2. Present the Halifax Index at the Annual State of the Economy Conference. The Index tracks yearly progress on economic, environmental and social objectives and recommends ideas for improvement.</p> | <p>The Partnership presented the 2nd Halifax Index at the State of the Economy Conference in May 2013. Details and copies can be found at <a href="http://www.greaterhalifax.com/en/agh_home/halifax-index/default.aspx">http://www.greaterhalifax.com/en/agh_home/halifax-index/default.aspx</a><br/>Preliminary work has begun on the third Index, set for release in May 2014.</p>  |
|   |                 | <p>1. Mobilize community stakeholders to collectively respond to and/or support immediate threats and opportunities.</p>   | <p>No action required in Q3</p>  |
|   |                 | <p>2. Continue to mobilize and engage community support for Halifax Shipyard's Shipbuilding Project and major projects.</p>  | <p>The Partnership sits as a member of the Province's Major Project Table focused on the collaboration and alignment of stakeholders on the benefits of the Shipbuilding project and major projects.<br/>The Partnership has also delivered &gt;35 presentations to various organizations and groups to increase awareness of the benefits of the shipbuilding project and major projects.</p>   |
|   |                 | <p>3. Implement an attraction and retention strategy for Regional and Head Offices to/in Halifax.</p>  | <p>At March 31st, work on the Regional and Head Office attraction and retention strategy is wrapping up. The competitive intelligence report – contracted to Millier, Dickinson, Blaise – is complete, including best practices, an economic impact assessment of local HROs, defining Halifax's value proposition and providing competitive intelligence on target companies.</p> <p>Visitation with local HRO representatives as a part of the collection of information for the competitive intelligence report is complete as well, though visitation will continue on an ongoing basis as part of GHP's SmartBusiness program.</p> <p>Marketing and engagement is on-going. A comprehensive communications and stakeholder relations strategy that promotes HRO benefits to the local community, elected officials and key stakeholders is underway, including the official release of the Head and Regional Office study, which was held mid-April.</p> <p>Report released on April 14th. Go to:<br/>Final Report: <a href="http://bit.ly/1icKc8v">http://bit.ly/1icKc8v</a><br/>Infographic: <a href="http://bit.ly/1f21UKY">http://bit.ly/1f21UKY</a><br/>HRO Value Proposition: <a href="http://bit.ly/Pr7M4t">http://bit.ly/Pr7M4t</a></p> |

| GOALS (5)  | OBJECTIVES (17)   | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)  | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <p>Capitalize on our best opportunities for economic growth.</p> | <p>Identify and respond to high value, high potential economic growth opportunities and encourage investment, exports, business productivity, innovation and competitiveness.</p> | <p>4. Work with the Halifax Gateway Council to coordinate activities to improve Gateway efficiency and use.</p>  | <p>The Partnership continues to manage the Halifax Gateway Council through a management services agreement.</p> <p>The business development funnel for the Logistics Park is managed by the Halifax Logistics Committee, with representation from NSBI, HRM, the Partnership, Halifax Port Authority, Halifax Stanfield International Airport, CN, NSERDT and ACOA. There are currently 13 qualified leads in funnel. No closes; however, one 5 acre lot is under tentative purchase and sale agreement.</p> <p>October 3rd at the Mississauga Convention Centre<br/>Halifax Gateway Council and partners hosted a briefing Session on Atlantic Canada's \$100 Billion in Mega Projects to inform the Canadian transportation, logistics and supply chain community on the many "mega projects" that are currently underway in Atlantic Canada. Elizabeth Beale, President &amp; CEO, APEC, provided results from a research report that focused on the supply chain ramifications that these major projects will have for companies wanting in on the action. A panel session featuring transportation sector representatives from several of the major projects and an update from Fred Morley on the Halifax economy was also provided. Go to <a href="http://www.halifaxgateway.com/en/home/megaprojectsmmap.aspx">http://www.halifaxgateway.com/en/home/megaprojectsmmap.aspx</a> to view the mega project map.</p> <p>November 4 – 8th -- multi city European Gateway mission<br/>The Halifax Gateway Council and partners participated in a multi-city mission specifically focused on raising the profile of the \$115 billion in major project activity and how these projects relate to gateway assets in Halifax, the transportation infrastructure, and CETA. Cities included Brussels, Antwerp, Amsterdam, and Dusseldorf –Neuss -- each event averaging 40 participants.</p> <p>November 25, 2013 -- presented to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on International Trade.<br/>Presentation emphasized the need for the Federal Government to continue to support organizations like the Halifax Gateway in sharing the collective messaging on CETA in Europe and an overview of the role of the Halifax Gateway and its priorities.</p> |
|  |   | <p>5. Align and collaborate with provincial and federal partners to position the Halifax business case to attract high-value, high-potential business investments.</p> | <p>The Partnership continues to have ongoing collaboration with Nova Scotia Business Incorporated (NSBI) and other partners to attract and retain business investment. The Partnership has supported several site visits and helped NSBI connect potential new businesses to business, academic and research partners, and various resources. To ensure a seamless customer experience with one main contact point, NSBI remains the lead organization for Direct Foreign Investment projects. We are currently managing the following business development funnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27 Requests for Information (RFI) - A request by a third party looking for information to support the decision to open an office in Halifax.</li> <li>• 33 Leads - Companies who have expressed a specific interest in Halifax beyond the scope of a RFI. The company have confirmed their desire and capacity to invest abroad or partner with a local company in Halifax.</li> <li>• 38 Prospects – Companies who have shortlisted Halifax for their investment.</li> <li>• 6 Closed - Companies who have successfully opened an operation and hired at least 1 employee in Halifax. (total of 10 jobs created in the first round of hiring. More are expected as these initial employees complete the initial set up and hire additional staff.)</li> </ul> <p>Visit <a href="http://whyhalifax.ca">whyhalifax.ca</a>, to view the Partnership's suite of investment attraction tools.</p>  |

| GOALS (5) | OBJECTIVES (17) | YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)  | YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q1 & Q2  |
|-----------|-----------------|--|--|
|           |                 | 6. Work with the Province, GHP, Destination Halifax and others to maximize opportunities presented by the new convention centre. | The Partnership is collaborating with Trade Centre Limited to identify opportunities to present to local business community and industry sectors on the benefits offered by the new convention centre. |
|           |                 | 7. Improve the connection and collaboration between research organizations and business.   | No action to report in Q4.   |





# SmartBusiness Report: April 2013 – March 2014

## SmartBusiness Activity – Fiscal Year in Review

One of the functions of the SmartBusiness program is to gather and identify information about the companies that it assists. This data is **not meant to be a public opinion poll**; it is not a random sampling of companies meant to provide a clean picture. **This is a conversation with industry.** The data comes from the offices of business leaders, from frank discussions, and often times from outspoken honesty. It gets at ‘private opinion,’ the deeper held beliefs that businesses actually use to judge their community. Through these discussions, the SmartBusiness Team has undertaken the following activity this fiscal year:

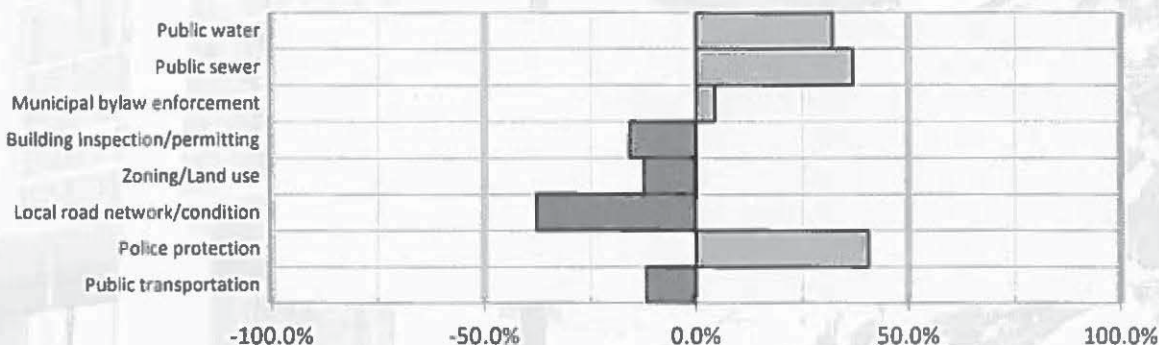
- Retention Visits: 200
- Retentions: 11
- Expansions: 21
- Referrals Generated: 449
- Business Consultations: 318
- Jobs Created & Retained: 76+

## Municipal Services

SmartBusiness collects private opinions on municipal services and regulation. Businesses are asked to provide opinions and input on how these factors impact their business. A summary of the findings reveals:

- Business opinions of municipal services have declined in recent months. Since the report in October, the index of each municipal service tracked by SmartBusiness has decreased. However, despite this downward motion, many of the services are still highly respected and net opinions remain positive for four of the eight indicators.
- In terms of overall opinion, police protection, public sewer, and public water continue to dominate as the most positive indicators. Their approval indices (41%, 37%, and 32% respectively) indicate a firm consensus that these services are performing satisfactorily. In each case, about 4/5<sup>ths</sup> of companies considered the service Good or Excellent, with most describing them as good.
- The service that businesses were least satisfied with was the local road network, though a few others registered a moderate level of dissatisfaction. Unfortunately, opinions around these issues have been declining in recent months. Public transportation has been perhaps the most stable opinion.
- The commentary from businesses remains focused highly on public transportation, with one in every four commentators indicating remarks. The vast majority are based around access in the company’s area.

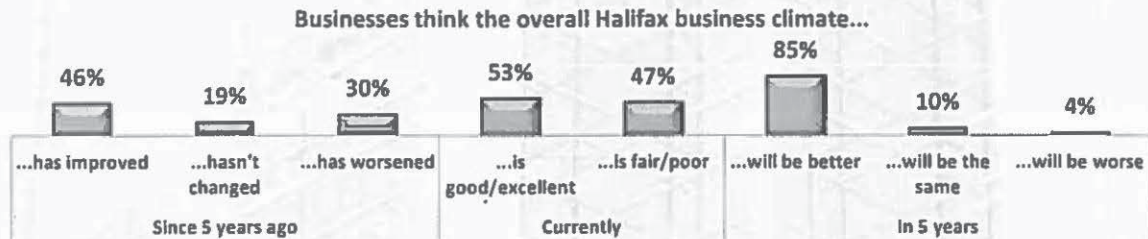
### Index of Performance





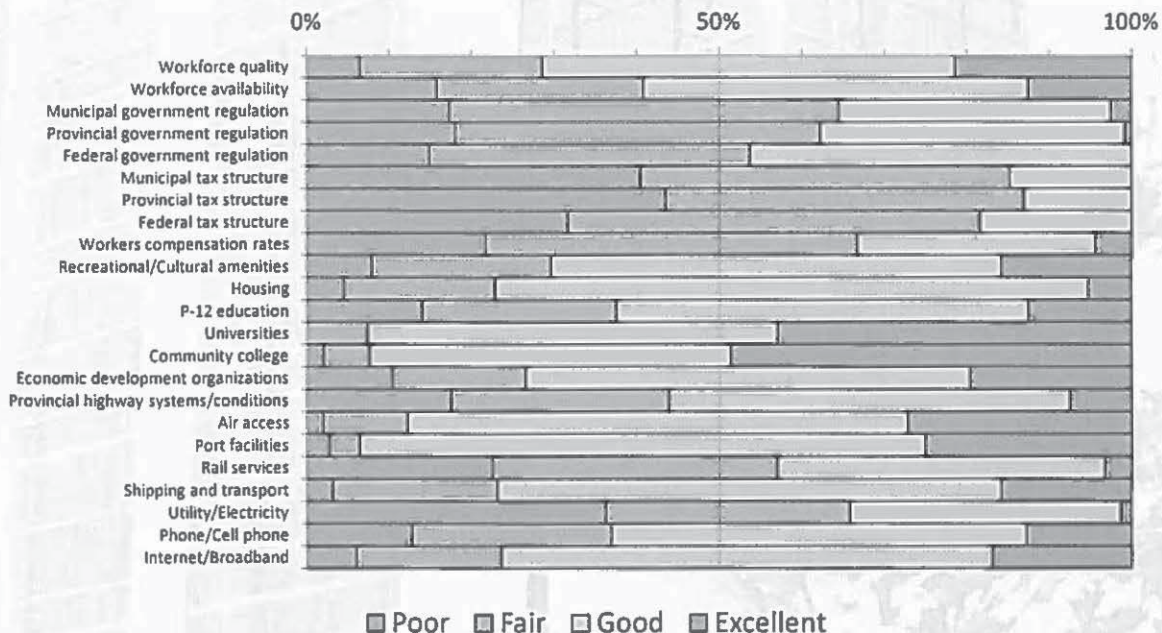


## Business Climate



- Private sector opinions of the current business climate have declined since February and have generally followed a gradual downward trend over the past 6 months. However, opinion is still primarily positive, especially about the prospects for the future, which remain stable at their current levels.
- While the decline is a little unsettling, the positive outlook around future economic performance is a refreshing indicator. It shows a resilience of business confidence in face of adversity; they have hope.
- Since the last report, satisfaction indicators have moved around significantly, with most indicators changing by 5% or more. However, much of this movement is focused around government regulation and taxes, which is largely expected as the timing coincides with the tax season and fiscal year end.

## Share of Respondents



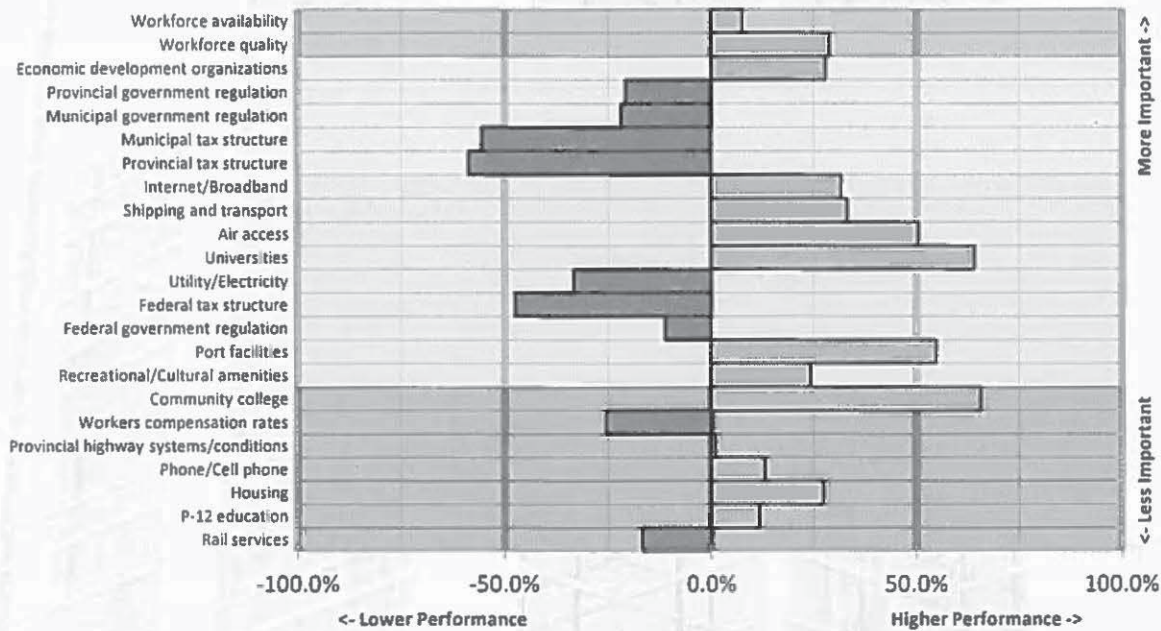
SmartBusiness data allows for a cross-section of opinions surrounding the business climate. This lets us contrast how highly businesses regard different elements in the business climate with how important they are to day-to-day operations. In the table below, elements are arranged from the highest-to-lowest shares of businesses which considered them a top-3-issue facing their business today.





## Business Climate Cross-Section

### Index of Performance and Importance



Share of businesses indicating the factor is one of the top-three most important to their business today:

Red: 25%+

Yellow: 15-25%

Green: 5-15%

Blue: 0-5%

- The top five most critical business climate factors continue to hold their position: Workforce availability (40%) and quality (35%), economic development organizations (24%), as well as provincial (19%) and municipal government (18%) are still considered most important for business.
- Though there have declines in workforce availability (-7.6%) and workforce quality (-1.6%), these declines are smaller than the recent positive spikes in the previous report (+11.8% and +10.8% respectively). Overall these indicators shown large net gains in satisfaction in recent months.
- Recent movements are driven by declines in approval of government regulation and taxes, coincident with tax season. Despite drops in their satisfaction, they remain an important factor for business.

### Greater Halifax Partnership

The Greater Halifax Partnership (the Partnership) is the lead economic development organization for Halifax, Nova Scotia. We plan, pursue, and champion the ideas and actions that help Halifax and our region succeed. As a public-private partnership, we bring all three levels of government together with more than 130 private-sector investors – large and small companies alike – to stimulate and drive economic development and growth in our city.

If you have any questions or concerns about this document, its methodology, or how its indices are measured, please contact the Partnership at [info@greaterhalifax.com](mailto:info@greaterhalifax.com) for further details.



P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3A5 Canada

**Community Planning & Economic Development Standing Committee  
June 12, 2014**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original signed by:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Maggie MacDonald, A/Managing Director, GREA

**DATE:** June 3, 2014

**SUBJECT:** *Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians*  
The Report of the Commission on Building Our New Economy

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

March 4, 2014 - MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Karsten that Halifax Regional Council request:

1. A staff report that examines the role of HRM in the implementation of, and alignment with *Now or Never – an Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians*, including giving consideration to possible revision and update of HRM's Economic Strategy and impacts and implications with respect to delivery by departments and agencies responsible for HRMs economic development, and to also identify other related areas that may require further study and alignment; and

2. That the Mayor write a letter to the Premier, opposition leaders and UNSM President outlining HRM's readiness to work in partnership to develop the province-wide response to the report.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

**Business and industrial development**

71 (1) The Municipality may

(a) solicit and encourage the establishment and development of new, and the establishment, development and expansion of existing institutions, industries and businesses in and around the Municipality;



(b) publicize the advantages of the Municipality or any part of the Municipality and the surrounding areas as a location for the establishment and expansion of institutions, industries and businesses;

(c) pay grants to a body corporate for the purpose of promoting the Municipality or any part of the Municipality and the surrounding areas as a location for institutions, industries and businesses;

(d) prepare and disseminate information about the Municipality or any part of the Municipality and the surrounding areas for the assistance of institutions, industries and businesses intending to locate or expand in the Municipality or the surrounding area.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Government of Nova Scotia created the Commission on Building Our New Economy in November 2012. Chaired by Ray Ivany, the Commission consulted widely with Nova Scotians. It produced an interim report in May 2013 and a final report in February 2014.

The Commission's core message is that Nova Scotia is today in the early stages of what may be a prolonged period of accelerating population loss and economic decline. The report notes, that "these negative prospects are not, however, inevitable or irreversible."

The Commission's Report – *Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians* – (Now or Never) spells out the state of the province and points out provincial assets and opportunities. The report can be found at <http://onens.ca/>. Attachment A summarizes section 1 of the report.

The core of Now or Never is a set of 19 ambitious "Goals for Transformation". Each goal has a clear and challenging target to achieve by 2024. Now or Never also identifies 12 new strategic directions, or "game changers", needed to achieve the goals for transformation. Now or Never also highlights the crucial importance of attitudes.

### *Attitudes*

What attitudes need to be changed?

- *General* – "There is a clear need for Nova Scotians to come together and consider not only who gets what from our collective pie, but how we can make it bigger for all to share." (Page 6 in Now or Never)
- *Importance of economic development* – The CRA Study of Nova Scotian attitudes (Pages 218 – 233) notes that "there is widespread recognition that economic growth is crucial to the province's ability to deliver essential public services." A challenge is turning this general understanding into support for projects and activities supporting economic development.
- *Importance of immigration* – Solving Nova Scotia's demographic problem will involve bringing in more immigrants, welcoming and retaining them. The CRA Study notes "there is reasonably high level of recognition that the population in Nova Scotia needs to grow over the next decade, although there appears to be some resistance to immigration as a solution."
- *Importance of Halifax* – Past thinking assumed that rural areas must somehow diminish if Halifax grows. Now or Never notes that "a small province or region needs a few dynamic urban centres to consolidate the elements essential to growth and innovation across its whole



economy.” (Page 27) “If wisely planned and managed, this growth will generate positive linkages and spread effects for other areas of the province.”(Page 42).

### *Assets*

Now or Never notes that “If, however, the province is able to pursue a different path – one that embraces change and renewal, and builds on its assets and opportunities – it may be possible to stabilize economic and population trends and then, gradually, to start building a much more positive future.” (Page 36) Among the assets, Now or Never highlights the “spreading impacts of growth of Halifax” (Page 42) “If wisely planned and managed, this growth will generate positive linkages and spread effects for other areas of the province.” (Page 42) Many of the other assets highlighted in the “Assets and Opportunities” section of Now or Never are driven from Halifax.

### *Activities*

In the months since the release of Now or Never, there has been considerable discussion of its contents. Numerous organizations have sought to demonstrate how the work they do fits with the recommendations of Now or Never. There have also been many articles in the press.

At the municipal level, Now or Never has also had widespread discussion.

- HRM staff considered the report internally.
- HRM staff discussed the report with provincial officials.
- The Atlantic Mayors Congress in Charlottetown discussed the report which, although written about Nova Scotia, resonates strongly with officials in other Atlantic provinces.
- The Greater Halifax Partnership’s annual State of the Economy Conference on May 22, 2014 discussed the report, focusing on the need to change attitudes as a first step.
  - GHP presented the “Halifax Pledge” designed to encourage individuals to make a personal commitment to thinking and working differently.
  - The meeting also introduced the concept of an “innovation ecosystem” as a way to think about how to work on issues raised in Now or Never.
- UNSM hosted a Truro event devoted to the report on May 23, 2014.
  - The province suggested municipalities could advance the Now or Never ideas by collaborating effectively, supporting private sector development, creating welcoming communities, doing strategic land use planning and making strategic investments

On June 2, the province announced the composition of the 15 member Task Force that will formulate a 10 year economic and population plan to implement the recommendations in Now or Never. The task force will deliver the plan in December 2015.

## **DISCUSSION**

In March 2014 Regional Council requested a staff report that:

- examines the role of HRM in the implementation of, and alignment with, the report
  - gives consideration to:
    - possible revision and update of HRM’s Economic Strategy



- o impacts and implications with respect to delivery by departments and agencies responsible for HRMs economic development, and
- identifies other related areas that may require further study and alignment

This information report responds to the request from Regional Council.

### The Report

For people who have been paying attention to the Nova Scotia economy, there is little new in Now or Never. The province has faced a series of economic challenges over the past 20 years. Now or Never references *Creating Our Own Future*, the 1991 Voluntary Planning document which highlighted some of the same issues. Now or Never pulls together many ideas that have been discussed in the intervening years. Through its extensive consultations, the Commission has put the challenges squarely out for public discussion.

### *Attractiveness of Halifax*

Now or Never suggests specific areas where Nova Scotia must act. For many of them, there are things Halifax can do both directly and through arm's length agencies.

Underpinning any specific actions Halifax might take to deal with the topics of population, economic and business development and governance/finance lies the challenge of making Halifax as attractive a place as possible for both current and potential residents and businesses.

Making Halifax a place where people want to live and work is probably the most helpful general thing that the municipality can do to support achievement of the goals in Now or Never. If Halifax becomes a more attractive place for young people, immigrants, entrepreneurs and innovators, people will come and stay. If Halifax's attractiveness diminishes, it will be more difficult to attract people and keep them here, even if the province and the municipality mount a collection of programs with specific targets. Making the city run better is a crucial general foundation on which to build specific programs to achieve specific objectives. Keeping the municipal finances in good order, delivering the services that residents expect from a well-run municipality, offering a range of experiences for residents to enjoy will all contribute to making Halifax a place where people want to be. All parts of the municipal machinery have to work well and continue to improve over time.

### Role of HRM in the implementation of, and alignment with *Now or Never*

As home to over 40% of the province's population and source of over 50% of the province's Gross Domestic Product, Halifax's response to Now or Never will have a significant impact on its implementation and achieving the goals for transformation.

There are at least two levels of implementation that involve Halifax. One is at the overall implementation leadership level, advocating action and leading by example. The second is at the practical level of implementing programs and projects that will help the province achieve the



Now or Never targets. Halifax needs to lead at both levels. Initial work by elected officials and staff and organizations like GHP is already demonstrating that leadership.

### *Activities*

A review of Now or Never's transformational goals suggests some areas for Halifax to focus on:

- **Population Goals:** Halifax currently leads the work on a Local Immigration Partnership and Welcoming Community. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with post-secondary education institutions should improve student retention. GHP's Connector program also supports the report's population goals by helping newcomers and young people integrate into the business community/workforce.
- **Economic Development Goals:** The private sector and the provincial government must lead the work on many of these goals. Halifax currently works in support of many of them. Examples include: GHP's business retention and expansion program, the mayor's celebrate business program and visits to businesses, general support for economic development by the Mayor and Regional Council, and the post-secondary MOU. Support for Destination Halifax and the new Halifax Convention Centre contribute to expanding the tourism sector.
- **Governance and Fiscal Goals:** Halifax has offered to contribute to the province-wide implementation plan for Now or Never. Development of that plan has just begun. Halifax's experience with amalgamation and the good fiscal health of the municipality already contribute to the achievement of these goals.

Now or Never sets targets for 2024. As Halifax develops its future plans, expanding support for activities in the target areas needs to be a part of Halifax's corporate planning.

### *Alignment*

*A Greater Halifax*, the municipal economic strategy, and its predecessor, *Strategies for Success*, were both developed after widespread consultation. It is not surprising that the thrusts of both strategies align well with the directions set in Now or Never, also built on extensive consultation.

Nothing in the Halifax economic strategy runs counter to the directions proposed in Now or Never. Some elements of the Halifax plan are specific to particular municipal needs e.g. improvements to the regional centre and adoption of a clearer brand. While not contributing directly to the achievement of specific Now or Never goals, a more vibrant regional centre and a clear, bold brand should both support making Halifax a more attractive place.

The Halifax economic development strategy also notes the importance of a better business climate, the attraction and retention of talent, and building on growth opportunities. These three goals overlap the thrust of Now or Never. These areas need continuation and deepening of work already underway.

In the period between now and the release of the Now or Never Task Force's plan, Halifax has an opportunity to support the work of the task force as it prepares its plan, to strengthen the work the municipality is already doing in support of the Now or Never directions, and lend a sense of urgency to the ongoing work to move Nova Scotia ahead.



### Impact on Economic Strategy

As noted above, there is good alignment between the Halifax economic development strategy and Now or Never. Building Halifax support for Now or Never does not require significant changes to the directions set by either the Council endorsed Halifax economic development strategy or the municipality's priority outcomes.

What will be required is ongoing assessment Halifax staff work and that of the outside agencies Halifax works with to make sure efforts align as closely as possible with Now or Never.

Some of the means to reach the goals of Now or Never are currently beyond the scope of what Halifax can do under the HRM Charter. The work underway to update the Charter is the place to tackle areas where the municipality might like to be engaged but currently cannot. As an example, many of the processes that Halifax uses for property development area spelled out in the Charter. A more permissive approach could allow HRM the flexibility to consider innovative policies and programs which speed up processes, improve the business climate, make Halifax more attractive and lead to more businesses starting, growing, exporting and providing more employment.

### Impact on HRM Service Delivery

Almost every element of the work of Halifax municipal staff, in so far as it makes the city a place where people and businesses want to be, has an impact on issues raised in Now or Never. A safe city with well-functioning infrastructure, affordable housing, good schools, efficient transit, available recreational and social opportunities, and a positive business climate will attract and retain residents. Making the day to day work of the police and fire services, public works, community and recreation and other elements of the city structure effective is the crucial base on which other municipal activities (and provincial and private sector work) must be built.

Now or Never notes the need for "a shared commitment to sustainable development and regulatory excellence" (Page 55). Halifax plays a key role here. Work has begun on a joint provincial/municipal approach to services to business. That work needs to continue. Simultaneously, the updating of the HRM Charter offers an opportunity to explore new ways of doing things with potentially new municipal powers. Now or Never specifically notes the need for municipal government reform that evaluates the effectiveness and sustainability of current service responsibilities, aligns tax policies with economic growth objectives, and reduces the regulatory burden. The HRM Charter Review is an ideal way for municipalities to begin this conversation with the Provincial government, and identify what the shared commitment noted above might mean in practice.

In discussions that have taken place about Now or Never, there has been a focus on the need for more of an "experimental mindset" as Halifax approaches its work. Other cities in Canada and internationally seem to have been more prepared to try things, keep those that work and abandon those that don't rather than waiting for the perfect program. Taking such an approach will require changing attitudes.



Updating the HRM Charter offers an opportunity to think differently about both the basis of the provincial/municipal relationship and how Halifax does its day to day work. Moving ahead aggressively with the Charter update should be a priority.

### Other Related Areas

Now or Never calls for an attitude shift. One aspect of that shift is the need to think in a more connected way about economic development. The “Innovation Ecosystem” model presented at the State of the Economy conference in May offers ways for Halifax better connect the wide ranging activities already underway to improve support for economic development specifically and for making Halifax a more attractive place generally. The approach also shows how Halifax might tie together work on updating the Regional Plan and launching the Centre plan, implementing the proposals from “Downtown I’m In” and the healthy communities events, incorporating the opportunities arising from changes to the Cogswell interchange, support for the Local Immigration Partnership and welcoming community work, rethinking Halifax’s role in housing and homelessness, and the recent Clairmont Review of the 2008 Roundtable report on violence.

### *Advocacy*

Now or Never is careful to point out that achieving the targets it sets will require input from all Nova Scotians. Governments alone cannot achieve the targets. Nor can the private sector. There needs to be a level of collaboration that Nova Scotia has not seen in recent years. Halifax can be an advocate for that increased collaboration and a champion of it.

### Next Steps

At a recent meeting about Now or Never, staff agreed to several immediate follow up steps:

- (1) While continuing to try to streamline the development approvals process for the municipality, work to accelerate the rewriting of the Halifax Charter.
- (2) Push ahead work on Access to Business changes already underway with the province.
- (3) Set up a work group to look at work with businesses. (What began as a discussion of making Halifax more friendly to business start-ups evolved into a discussion of where best to put efforts to support businesses. The first job of the group would be to determine the best target for our efforts, building on the learnings of the recent GHP *Halifax Head and Regional Offices* report.)

The direct economic development work of GHP, the Business Improvement Associations and Destination Halifax already includes activities which align well with the goals set out in Now or Never. As these agencies move into planning for 2015-16 and beyond, they need to consider how best to strengthen those activities and include new approaches in their new plans.

For 2014-15, Council endorsed four Priority Outcomes: Transportation, Healthy Communities, Economic Development and Governance/Communication. Continuing to move towards those outcomes will make Halifax a more attractive place to live and work and will support the



directions set in Now or Never. Council's continuing oversight of work on the priority outcome areas will contribute to achieving the Now or Never transformational goals.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no immediate financial implications in this report. As Halifax itself and agencies it supports like GHP, DH and the BIDs work to implement programs designed to reach some of the Now or Never targets, there may be requests for additional funding. Such requests will be dealt with in the annual planning and budgeting process.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Preparation of *Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians* involved a massive consultation with the people of Nova Scotia. The discussion of the report in a wide variety of venues and in the media keeps engagement high. No specific community engagement was done for this report. Future activities in support of Now or Never may well require more consultation.

### **ATTACHMENT**

A - One Nova Scotia – Highlights of Section I The Report of the Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy – Now or Never; An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians.

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.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.

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**5 May 2014**

**ONE NOVA SCOTIA**

**HIGHLIGHTS OF SECTION I THE REPORT OF THE NOVA SCOTIA COMMISSION ON BUILDING OUR NEW ECONOMY  
NOW OR NEVER; AN URGENT CALL TO ACTION FOR NOVA SCOTIANS  
FEBRUARY 2014**

**COMMISSIONERS**

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Dan Christmas Senior Advisor, Membertou, Cape Breton  
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**Report – Section I**

**Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians:**

**Economic History**

The report speaks to Nova Scotia's economic history, the ebb and flow of population growth and components of population change from the mid-1850s to the present, the role of industry and trade throughout Nova Scotia's history, changes to Nova Scotia's rural economy in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the rise of the "government led" economy in the second half of the twentieth century. It leads to a picture of the current economy – one of weak overall growth, losing skilled workers and educated youth and limited new investment and immigration.

*"Nova Scotia, and particularly its rural regions, now hovers on the brink of serious economic and population decline unless macro-economic conditions improve and new growth drivers emerge in the near future." Ivany Report p.16*

**Lessons learned**

- Things change and attitudes matter
- Geography and environment shape economy
- Size and location are a problem, and a solution
- Government can't do it alone
- The Limits of bottom up development

- The Challenge of Labour Mobility
- Inclusiveness goes with growth
- Immigration is essential
- We have to pull together
- Economies grow around cities
- We need more entrepreneurs
- We have to trade to grow
- Big or small, we need businesses that grow, and more of them

### **Assets and Opportunities**

- An improving macroeconomic outlook
- Regional capital projects
- An excellent post-secondary education system
- Untapped potential for resource development and renewable energy
- A skilled workforce
- Progress for disadvantaged groups
- Significant progress on innovation
- Expanding creative enterprise
- Great places to live
- Trade and transportation infrastructure
- Proven capacities for community leadership and collaboration
- Spreading impacts of growth of Halifax
- Economic development services

### **Goals for Growth and Renewal**

The Commission proposes a series of 'stretch goals' as concrete, measurable outcomes that leadership groups can focus on and use to construct their own roadmaps. There are not presented as absolute targets and it is expected that they will be further refined through consultation, research and formal decision-making.

#### *Population goals*

1. Inter-provincial migration  
NS will be averaging a net gain of 1,000 working age persons/year
2. International migration  
NS will be receiving annually its proportionate share (2.7%) of all new international immigrants to Canada (approx. 7,000 up from 2,400)
3. Retention of international students  
An annual average of 10% of foreign students will choose to become permanent residents



#### *Economic Development Goals*

4. The NS economy will generate 4,200 new business start-ups/year
5. NS will have increased the total annual value of exports by 50% to exceed \$20 billion
6. Firms participating in export trade  
The number of NS firms participating in export trade will have increased by 50% over current level of 850
7. Labour force participation rate  
NS will have a labour force participation rate at least as high as the Canadian rate (current: NS – 63.4%, Can – 66.4%)
8. Employment rate – First Nations and African Nova Scotians  
The employment rate for first Nations and African Nova Scotians will be equal to the provincial average (current – 62% for ANS, 53% for Aboriginal and 68% for province)
9. Youth employment  
NS youth employment rate will be at or better than national rate (current : NS -19.5%, national 14% )
10. Post-secondary education and training  
The proportion of the working age population with a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree will have increase from 55% to 65%
11. Universities research and development  
NS universities and NSCC will have doubled researched funding to \$360 million
12. Research and development partnerships  
Research and development partnerships between business enterprises and NS universities and the Community College will have doubled from an average of 1,000 per year to 2,000 per year
13. Venture capital  
The 5 year average for per capita venture capital investment will be equal to or better than the Canadian average (current: NS – \$24.8, Can - \$41.10)
14. Tourism expansion  
Gross business revenues from tourism will reach \$4 billion (double current level)
15. Fisheries and agriculture exports  
The value of exports from the fisheries and agricultural sectors will have doubled on a sustainable basis
16. Domestic markets for agricultural products  
The value of agricultural products produced for and consumed within the NS domestic market will have doubled
17. A province wide plan to achieve Nova Scotia’s new goals for sustainable economic growth and population renewal  
By the end of calendar year 2015 the Nova Scotia government, in collaboration with the municipal units, will have put in place, with appropriate legislative supports, a comprehensive development plan with practical strategies to meet the 2024 population and economic renewal goals set out above.
18. Reform of municipal government and regional service structures

Once the development plan described above is in place, the provincial government will immediately initiate a comprehensive review of current municipal government structures and of federal and provincial regional service delivery systems, improving efficiency, cost effectiveness and community engagement.

#### 19. Fiscal health

By 2024 the Province of Nova Scotia's net debt to GDP ratio, which was 36.7% for the year ending March 31st, 2013, will be 30% or less.

### **Game Changer Strategies**

It is not expected that the goals proposed in the report can be achieved through 'business as usual' across the public, private and community sectors. The report posits that the successful pursuit of the proposed goals will require much more effective and efficient deployment of current resources combined with changes in attitudes, policies, and practices across all business, government, and community sectors. The Commission identified 12 "game changers" for transformative change and renewal.

#### 1- A New Politics

The achievement of the ambitious goals and targets set out above will clearly require extraordinary effort and a much higher level of coordination and collaboration among business, government and community sectors than has been typical for Nova Scotia. The Commission believes that mobilizing an allparty, multi-partite effort to develop a comprehensive economic development plan and to accelerate the restructuring of regional government services and municipal government is essential if we are to achieve long-term economic growth and renewal in Nova Scotia.

#### 2- Attitude shift

A shared commitment to growing Nova Scotia's One Economy - The wider public needs to understand and support this imperative by openly addressing current attitudinal barriers to business development and entrepreneurship. Leaders in business, labour, government, communities and strategic institutions need to embrace this challenge and take responsibility for making it happen within their own activities and through expanded collaboration across their different fields of influence and activity. A new, more dynamic Nova Scotia economy needs growing urban centres that draw in people and capital and push development out to their surrounding regions. It needs well-managed and expanding linkages between cities, adjacent towns and rural regions. To provide impetus and a focus for resolving our urban/rural tensions in Nova Scotia, government and community leaders in rural regions need to pursue greater understanding and more positive attitudes toward the growth of our cities and larger towns, and their urban colleagues need to recognize their dependence on rural regions and economic sectors, and embrace new responsibilities for the development of the overall economy across the province. For their parts, urban leaders need to undertake to develop and actively support



wider planning processes to manage the pace of urban expansion and to optimize economic development, quality of life and environmental impacts on surrounding regions and communities.

- 3- **Strategic priority on business start-ups and growth oriented enterprises**  
To achieve these outcomes, greater priority must be placed on supporting organizations and enterprises that can deliver them. Business leaders and the wider community need to accept that not all businesses are equal in their economic impacts, and that just because an enterprise is small and locally-owned does not mean that it is a more deserving recipient of government support than other firms that hold greater potential to generate more wealth and employ more people over time. By the same token, just because a business or non-profit organization is large and employs a lot of people does not mean that it is significant contributor to innovation and growth in the Nova Scotia economy.
- 4- **Renewing rural industries**  
In future, as in the past, the traditional rural industries – tourism, manufacturing, mining, fisheries, forestry and agriculture – will provide the essential foundations for Nova Scotia’s rural economy. The basic viability of many of our rural communities hinges on whether these sectors can create more and better jobs and generate more wealth.
- 5- **A Shared Commitment to Sustainable Development and Regulatory Excellence**  
A consistent, well-enforced and efficient regulatory framework is essential if we are to bridge the gap between sound resource and environmental management and the ability to realize the economic potential of our assets.
- 6- **Rebuilding our Trade Economy**  
As in our past history, Nova Scotia has good reasons today to pursue trade growth and to embrace a free trade policy outlook. Many of the most significant economic opportunities on the Nova Scotia horizon – selling more renewable energy, seafood and manufactured products to the U.S., expanded fisheries, forestry and agricultural exports to Europe, and fisheries and agricultural trade with Asia – rely on improved access to international markets.
- 7- **Excellence in Education and Training**  
One of the most notable aspects of the Commission’s public engagement activities was the consistency with which business and community spokespersons called for improvements in public education to better prepare our youth for transition from school to work in a knowledge-driven economy.
- 8- **Becoming A More Inclusive and Welcoming Province**  
Citizens across the province have divided views on efforts to attract new Canadians to their communities. Most people support this way to grow the population, but some fear that new immigrants will take jobs away from local people in areas of persistently high unemployment.



**9- Promoting Entrepreneurship**

If we are to grow more businesses, and have them be more successful, Nova Scotia needs more entrepreneurs. More young people need to come out of their education and training programs not just looking for a job, but with the knowledge, skills and confidence to create jobs for themselves and others. More owner– operators of small businesses need to push themselves to become bigger businesses, and need to be supported in, and recognized for, their efforts.

**10- Integrating Economic Development Services**

In his 2010 report on Nova Scotia’s economic development agencies, noted policy expert, Dr. Donald Savoie urged government to rationalize and integrate business development services so that Nova Scotia would become “the most business friendly jurisdiction in Canada in terms of accessing government programs and services”. The Commission believes that Dr. Savoie’s recommendation should remain as the key objective.

**11- Better Management of Economic Development Investment Funds**

The Commission’s most basic concern is that... different development agencies work together more effectively as a more fully integrated support system for business growth and economic transformation.

**12- Finding A Committed Federal Partner**

In almost every policy field that is important for Nova Scotia – energy, fisheries and oceans, international trade, immigration, transportation, human resources development, environment, research and development, etc — the Canadian constitution divides responsibilities between federal and provincial jurisdictions. Nova Scotia’s shrinking share of both Canada’s economy and its population provides prima facie evidence that this arrangement is not currently working well for us. There is significant room for improvement in the working relationship between the two levels of government.

**Summary prepared by:**

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