

HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
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Item No. 5
Halifax Regional Council
June 2, 2015

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed

Councillor Wayne Mason, Chair
Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee

DATE: May 22, 2015

SUBJECT: Economic Strategy & Halifax Partnership Update – Year End 2014-2015

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Motion by the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee at a meeting held on May 21, 2015.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 4 (b) of the Committee's Terms of Reference RE: 'overseeing the progress of HRM's Economic Strategy and Outcome areas and related initiatives'

BACKGROUND

The Committee received a staff report on this matter at its May 21, 2015 meeting. The Committee passed a motion recommending that the report be forwarded to Council for information.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Not applicable.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 'A': Staff report dated May 8, 2015.

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 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant



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Attachment A
Community Planning and Economic
Development Committee
May 21, 2015

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

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed by

Maggie MacDonald, Managing Director, Government Relations & External Affairs

DATE: May 8, 2015

SUBJECT: **Economic Strategy & Halifax Partnership Update**
Year End 2014-2015

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 24, 2014: MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Watts that the Information Report dated June 6, 2014 Re: Economic Strategy Year End Update, and the Information Report dated June 3, 2014 Re: Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians – The Report of the Commission on Building Our New Economy be forwarded to Council for information.

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 Halifax Partnership (the Partnership) 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 the Partnership reviewed the strategy and significantly tightened up the strategy implementation activities. The updated, Council-endorsed Strategy can be read [here](#).

Economic Indicator Highlights – Fiscal 2014-2015

- 2015 is expected to be a strong year for Halifax – The Conference Board of Canada is forecasting a year of strong overall growth for the Halifax economy, led by the start of construction on the Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships at the Halifax Shipyard in September.
- Employment growth is driven by full-time gains – Over 5,000 net new jobs have been added since this time last year. This represents 6,000 additional full time jobs and 1,000 fewer part time jobs. This means more stable, better paying jobs for Haligonians.
- Offshore energy developments yield mixed results – Deep Panuke's estimated recoverable reserves have been significantly reduced. Its economic impact will be diminished as it changes to a seasonal venture. Looking longer-term, Shell's major investment in offshore oil will be ramping up. The project is proceeding ahead of schedule; the company is planning to start two exploratory wells in the latter half of this year.
- Purchasing power is on the rise – Average weekly earnings show consistently high growth in the city. Coupled with low growth in consumer prices, this means much more purchasing power for Haligonians. This growth is likely due to the shift towards full time employment..

(See Attachment 2 for further Economic Highlights for Q3 of 2014-2015 and Attachment 3 for five-year Employment, Population and Commercial Tax Base figures for Halifax, Nova Scotia and Canada)

Business Climate Highlights – Fiscal 2014-2015

Business climate data was gathered by the Halifax Partnership's SmartBusiness program staff during 150 business retention interviews with companies (conducted between April 2014 and March 2015). For additional detail, please see the SmartBusiness Report (Attachment 5). Please note that this data is not meant to show representative opinions you would find from public polling. This is a representative of a conversation with industry.

- **Overall Business Climate**– While changes are quite small, there has been an increase in overall opinions of Halifax’s business climate. More than half of businesses believe the business climate has improved (54.3%) and is currently good or excellent (56.3%). A very high number (85.6%) of businesses believe that the climate will be better in five years.
- **Municipal Services** – Three Municipal Services stand out as particularly important to businesses: Public Transportation (65.0%), Local Road Network (45.0%), and Bylaw Enforcement (33.8%). Year over year changes show a moderate decline in opinions of Public Transportation and Road Networks.
- **Labour and Education** – Businesses agree that Halifax is doing well at providing quality labour. Ratings of performance are high for Workforce Quality (+33.1). Fewer companies are satisfied with the availability of that labour. Workforce Availability has fallen from +7.6 to -2.3 since April of last year.
- **Taxation and Regulation** – Most companies perceive regulation and taxation as obstacles. Though measures of satisfaction with taxation are very negative, all three levels (municipal, provincial, and federal) have improved in Q4 and have remained stable since April of last year.
- **Infrastructure** – There have been some negative shifts in Infrastructure this year, but most categories have similar positions compared to last year. Utility/Electricity is the most often discussed topic, though movements have been both positive and negative. Shipping and Transport remains the most important issue in Infrastructure (10.0%) and businesses appear satisfied with its performance (+37.3).
- **Economic Development** – Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) are now rated higher in importance than any other business climate factor. Just over half of companies (51.5%) consider EDOs to be a top-3 concern for their business. Opinions of EDOs, specifically incentive granting agencies, reached an all-time high of +34.5.

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. In addition, Attachment 4 provides status updates regarding deliverables from the Service Level Agreement (SLA) entered into between the Greater Halifax Partnership and the Municipality.

- **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 municipal business unit work, during Q4 includes:

- The Solar City Pilot Project has completed with 388 signed contracts, a 500% increase to pre-program activity.

- Solar Photovoltaic projects completed at West Street Fire Station, Northbrook Training Centre, Alderney Gate and Chocolate Lake Washrooms. Solarwall project progressing at Dartmouth Sportsplex.
- New public art pieces unveiled at the Central Library, Canada Games Centre and Dartmouth Bridge Transit Terminal.
- \$300,000 in municipal grant funding provided to Professional Art Organizations during the 2014/15 fiscal year.
- The Draft Halifax Transit Moving Forward Together Plan was released and stakeholder comments on the draft were collected. The draft plan envisions a future transit network designed to enhance sustainable mobility (both in and out of the Regional Centre and within the Regional Centre).
- The African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (ANSAIO) continues to work collaboratively with the African Nova Scotian and Visible Minority Women's Network employee group to enhance talent development, diversity of the workforce, and employee retention within Halifax Regional Municipality.
- The ANSAIO, in collaboration with Municipal Operations (MOPS) and the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB), has organized an African Nova Scotian Youth Event to expose 20-24 high school youth to employment opportunities in Horticulture in a hands-on, job-shadowing and training format, making in-roads for possible HRM summer employment in this area.

Halifax Partnership

- In 2014-2015 the Connector Program saw:
 - 1,345 participants
 - 763 Connectors (122 additional Connectors)
 - 556 jobs found
 - 108 additional Newcomers
 - 103 additional International Students
 - 112 additional Young and Emerging Talent (including recent grads and laid-off workers)
- The Partnership's Smart Business program (April 2014 to March 2015) saw:
 - 150 SmartBusiness retention visits (diagnostic surveys) – 124 SMEs / 50+ HRO's¹
 - 147 business follow-up consultations
 - 5 retentions | 7 expansions
 - >40 face-to-face meetings with action team members (YTD)
 - 390 business referrals (84% successfully closed)
 - 541+ jobs created and retained

SmartBusiness 2014-15 Annual Report Attached

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

¹ SMEs & HROs stand for Small to Medium Enterprises and Head & Regional Offices respectively. The HRO numbers include C-level meetings not recorded as Retention Visits in the Halifax Partnership's SmartBusiness Report (see Attachment 5).

This report updates activities undertaken by HRM staff and Halifax Partnership to implement the Economic Strategy and by Halifax Partnership 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 Economic Strategy Update report.


ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1:** A Greater Halifax – Economic Strategy 2011-2016: Actions for 2013 to 2016 – Q4 2014/2015 Report
- Attachment 2:** Halifax Economic Snapshot – 2014/2015
- Attachment 3:** Population, Employment and Commercial Tax Base Figures (Halifax, NS and Canada, 2009-2014)
- Attachment 4:** Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Greater Halifax Partnership and HRM: Deliverables for Q4 2014/2015
- Attachment 5:** SmartBusiness Report – 2014/2015

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 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Scott Sheffield, Community Developer – Government Relations & External Affairs, 902-490-3941

Report Approved by: Maggie MacDonald, Acting Managing Director – Government Relations & External Affairs, 902-490-1742

		ACTIONS FOR 2013 to 2016	
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>			
GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
	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 in progress; package for Council consideration is targeted for May 2015. Through the 5 year review of the Downtown Halifax Plan, staff is recommending an expedited review process for small projects. The 5 year review package is currently being reviewed by Legal Services and will be shared with the public and stakeholders in May 2015. Following public input, the package will be presented to Council for consideration. Development and construction permit fees to be reviewed and adjusted based on Planning & Development organizational review and Regional Council direction. Implementation of enhanced fee payment options to enable acceptance of credit cards for development and construction fees is completed. Potential online payment capability to be investigated with the launch of ePost option by Finance.
		2. Provide density bonuses and site plan approvals as appropriate for increasing density in the Regional Centre.	Bill 83 was proclaimed in 2013, expanding the Halifax Regional Municipality authority to use bonus zoning and site plan approvals. The means by which we will use these tools to achieve a compact, civic inspired Centre while reinforcing the best qualities of our unique neighbourhoods is being advanced through the Centre Plan project. The project entails the creation of a new Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use Bylaw for the Halifax Peninsula and the areas of Dartmouth within the Circumferential Highway, extensive consultation with the public will take place in 2015 with new policy anticipated in 2016.
		3. Redesign the development approvals process, including consultation, to decrease limitations to urban development and to ensure efficient and effective feedback.	Draft report on updated consultation processes under review with P&D management team with the item anticipated to be routed to CPED in May/June 2015. Development approval process improvements to be determined through Centre Plan exercise for the Regional Centre and P&D organizational review outcomes. All efforts will be taken to ensure uniformity in policy and practice throughout HRM.
		1. Raise awareness of the availability of parking in the regional centre in alignment with the HRM Parking Strategy.	Parking Roadmap completed. Implementation program for 2015-16 includes: "Improve public access to parking information through a variety of media messages including signage, website, social media, and awareness/education campaign."

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
<p>REGIONAL CENTRE 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 & infrastructure improvements.</p>	<p>On February 11, 2014, Halifax Regional Council voted to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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; 2. Commit to a \$50 million program, contingent upon other levels of government funding with one third municipal contribution of \$16.67 million spread evenly over the five years, beginning with \$3.33 million in fiscal year 2014/15; 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 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. <p>On August 5th, Halifax Regional Council approved the list of projects outlined under each of Council's three priority areas, for potential federal infrastructure funding including the list of projects for the 5-Year \$50 Million downtown capital campaign approved by Council in February 2014. Council further directed staff to submit applications to the Building Canada Fund, and implement an advocacy strategy to begin negotiations to secure funds for some or all of the projects listed in this report. Staff are currently working to complete application for the Building Canada Funds.</p>
		<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>The technical analysis and land plan was presented to Regional Council (in April) and approval was given to move forward with the redevelopment of the Cogswell Interchange. KBRs was the successful proponent for the Executive Search for a Project Director. The schedule calls for a short list of candidates by fiscal year end.</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>Halifax Regional Council approved moving forward with the redevelopment of the Cogswell Lands. This decision was based on the technical assessment that had been carried out. The technical assessment looked at the feasibility of removing the Cogswell Interchange and redeveloping the lands from both a technical and economic lens. One of the components of the technical assessment was the use of district energy for the site.</p> <p>The Halifax Regional Municipality is seeking a contract with a Project Director whose role is to establish a Project Office to oversee the Cogswell Redevelopment Project covering such tasks as: risk assessment, procurement advice, moving the project from concept to design and through to construction, responsible for quality assurance on the job, workplace safety, decision making and providing guidance to the contractor(s) and the best method to release the lands to the development market.</p> <p>The Project Management Office, under the direction of the Project Director, will be responsible for the coordination of all aspects of the Cogswell Lands Redevelopment. In addition to the engineering and procurement aspects of the project, there will be significant communication requirements with various external stakeholders, decision makers, the Steering Committee, Working Committee and staff. Critical aspects of the project management service include: risk assessments, holding the contractor to the construction schedule, scheduling of various components that are on the critical path for the Project's success; ensuring land negotiations for land assembly/land agreements with various land holders are concluded, urban planning requirements are initiated on time, and coordination with other construction projects that are underway in the downtown area such as the Angus L MacDonald bridge re-decking project, and on abutting properties (Casino and Delta Barrington Hotel as examples). It is not anticipated that the successful project manager will be an expert in all of these areas, rather they need to be able to coordinate all of these aspects of the project with the appropriate professionals. In addition to experience in managing brownfield redevelopments the project description specifically asks for experience in district energy.</p> <p>The Redevelopment (demolition and reconstruction) of the Cogswell Lands is estimated to be a 4 year project. It is anticipated this employment contract will be for a period of 5 years. The development of the lands, including land use by-law (LUB) planning and real estate marketing will occur over an additional 4 to 5 years.</p>

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
	Reinvent the current approach to mobility in the Regional Centre.	1. Implement the active transportation plan with a priority placed on Regional Centre bike lanes.	<p>The 2014-19 Active Transportation Priorities Plan was approved by Regional Council in September.</p> <p>Design work completed for a multi-use overpass of the CN main line between Pine Hill Drive and SMU. Design work complete for Hollis Street bike lane to be constructed in Spring 2015.</p> <p>Upgrades to Dartmouth Ferry Terminal include better bike access and parking and security.</p> <p>Working with Dalhousie to install a separated bike lane on University Avenue scheduled for Spring 2015 construction.</p> <p>Strategy being developed for implementing bike lanes and local street bikeways in the Regional Centre.</p> <p>Greenway connection between Windsor Street and Quingate under construction. Connection of Burnside Drive Greenway to Highfield Transit Terminal begins construction this Spring. Greenway connections to the Porter's Lake Transit Terminal begin construction this Spring.</p> <p>Alignment study underway for extension of Dartmouth Waterfront Trail to the Macdonald Bridge.</p>
		2. Create a new transportation model that conveniently connects goods with their destinations while not interfering with residents' safe enjoyment of the Urban Core.	<p>Five year review of Regional Plan and Bedford/Mainland North corridor studies give further definition to road network plan.</p> <p>Public engagement on the Road Network Priorities Plan planned for Fall 2015.</p>
		3. Ensure the 5 year strategic framework for transit supports growth in the Regional Centre.	<p>The Draft Halifax Transit Moving Forward Together Plan was released to the public on February 17, 2015 and comments on the draft from both the public and stakeholders were collected until April 24th. It is anticipated that a proposed final draft of the Moving Forward Together Plan will be before Regional Council in Fall 2015. The proposed future transit network has been designed to provide increased sustainable mobility to and within the Regional Centre</p>
	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.	<p>New public art pieces have recently been unveiled at the Central Library, Canada Games Centre and Dartmouth Bridge Transit Terminal.</p> <p>Regional Council approved the \$300,000 in grant funding for Professional Art Organizations during the 2014/15 fiscal year. Applications are currently being received for the 2015/16 fiscal year.</p> <p>The 2014 Regional Plan endorsed the development of a Greenbelting and Public Spaces Priorities Plan and a Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan which will map existing resources and develop priorities for future investment. These plans will create the necessary policies, programs and budgets to further the priorities developed in consultation with stakeholders and citizens and endorsed by the Halifax Council.</p>
		2. Make available regional centre municipal public spaces for public art, cultural and educational programs.	<p>HRM public spaces in the Regional Centre are regularly available for programming and public art.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Equitable and increased access to municipal spaces for cultural activities will be addressed in upcoming region wide plans such as the Community Facility Master Plan, The Greenbelting and Public Spaces Priorities Plan and The Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan.</p>

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
		3. Create an inventory of cultural institutions, events and programs in the Regional Centre.	Mapping of cultural institutions and social heritage resources (includes events and traditional practices) will be part of the inventory phase of the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan. 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. In addition, Regional Council recently requested a Cultural Spaces Inventory which will be aligned with work on the Cultural and Heritage Priorities Plan.
	Reduce regulatory, tax and policy issues that can inhibit development and investment.	1. Identify opportunities to streamline regulatory requirements or processes through work with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on the Access to Business project.	Provincial government has redesigned and re-launched the Access to Business website.
2. Benchmark development charges, fees and timelines against those in other comparable jurisdictions.		Development and construction permit fees to be reviewed and adjusted based on Planning & Development organizational review and Regional Council direction.	
3. Continue to research and benchmark HRM's tax competitiveness against other municipalities.		Work with the City of Calgary on residential benchmarking is on-going. The latest information on 2012 taxes is on the HALIFAX website at: http://www.halifax.ca/taxes/benchmark/Residential.php . The latest data from 2014 should be available from Calgary shortly. In 2014-15, HRM Finance put out an RFP to conduct a commercial taxation benchmarking research project (20 cities across Canada and the eastern seaboard of the United States). To date, no research contact has been awarded.	
	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.	Provincial government has redesigned and relaunched Access to Business website.
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.		Results from the Partnership's SmartBusiness Program are shared quarterly with Halifax Government Relations and External Affairs Division and the Office of the CAO. Company common issues specific to Municipal services are identified and shared within the report. The Partnership also sits as a member of the SNSMR A2B Advisory Committee focused on improving municipal/provincial regulatory or service improvement.	

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
<p>BUSINESS CLIMATE 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 Annual Report is 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>Quality of Life Measures are Included in the Halifax Index. Details and copies can be found at http://www.halifaxpartnership.com/en/home/economic-data-reports/halifax-index/default.aspx The 4th Annual Halifax Index will be presented in June 2015.</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>The Solar City Pilot Project has completed with 388 signed contracts, a 500% increase to pre-program activity. Regional Council approved a second three year cohort of Solar City, expanding to add solar photovoltaic and solar thermal air to the current solar hot water offering. The target is 450 installations per year.</p> <p>The Community Energy Plan is undergoing final review.</p> <p>Solar Photovoltaic projects completed at West Street Fire Station, Northbrook Training Centre, Alderney Gate and Chocolate Lake Washrooms. Solarwall project progressing at Dartmouth Sportsplex.</p> <p>Municipality disclosed community and corporate emissions and climate change actions to the Carbon Disclosure Project in 2015.</p> <p>Watershed studies completed in Sandy Lake, Preston, Tantallon, Musquodoboit and Porters Lake.</p> <p>A model Environmental Section for future Community Planning projects completed.</p>

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
	<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>2. Increase private sector investment in economic growth and ensure strong representation and participation in the implementation of the Economic Strategy.</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. Results compared to year-end 2013-14 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% increase in total social media followers; • 28% increase in Twitter followers • 21% increase increase in facebook page likes; • 14% increase in LinkedIn group members • 95,454 total website users (47% increase over last year) • Hosted Building our Future events (“Let’s Talk Exports”) on May 7, 2014 with 120 attendees • Hosted our 2014 State of the Economy Conference on May 22, 2014 with 300 attendees • Hosted Building our Future - A Bold Halifax on January 12, 2015 <p>Additionally, the Partnership has defined and leads the implementation of the Mayor’s Celebrate Business Program. The following are highlights of activities in Q1 & Q3:</p> <p>The Partnership has defined and leads the implementation of the Mayor’s Celebrate Business Program. The following are highlights of 2014-15 activities:</p> <p>April 14 - HRO Economic Impact Release April 16 to 18 - Atlantic Mayor’s Congress in PEI (GHP Presented) April 28 - Web.com Breakfast May 22 - 3rd Annual State of the Economy Conference and Halifax Index June 17 - Partnership’s Business Leaders’ Roundtable July 25 - Site Visit to IH Mathers August 6 - Site Visit to Atlantic CAT September 11 - GHP Board Orientation September 13 - Mayor’s Welcome Reception for first year international students to Halifax (co-sponsored by GHP) November 13 - CNIB December 1 - NSCAD February 12th - LED Roadway Lighting</p> <p>As of March 31, there are 124 active investors in the Partnership (96% renewal rate). There were 15 new investors (13% increase). The new investors are: Lockheed Martin, BDO, Cisco, I.H. Mathers, IBM, Lois Lane Communications, Hilton/Silverbirch, Journeyman Films, Right Some Good, Revolve, Scotian Materials, Word Right Career & HR Consulting, Napkin Creative, Value Improvement Consulting, eOlio</p> <p>Non-renewals for the year are: Collins Barrow, Doctors NS, Shell Canada and Rogers</p>
		<p>1. Advocate for Federal and Provincial labour market programming that aligns with the needs of the Halifax business community.</p>	<p>GHP is a member of: Province’s Workforce of the Future Table (completed its work in December) LIP (Local Immigrant Partnership) Advisory Council LIP Economic Integration & Growth sub-committee Advisory Committee convened by Students NS for the planning of the Nova Scotia Youth Employer Awards.</p> <p>> Participated in and/or presented to >30 sessions focused on increasing opportunities for youth and/or newcomer attraction and retention and settlement improvements. > September 13 - Mayor’s Welcome Reception for first year international students to Halifax (co-sponsored by GHP)</p>

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
<p>TALENT Create a welcoming community where the world's talent can find great opportunities, engaged employers and resources for career advancement.</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"> - connecting the business community to labour market information and human resource management support, and - increasing business community's participation in labour market initiatives to attract and retain young professionals and international skilled workers. 	<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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. • 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>The Partnership has presented the benefits of being a Connector to various community organizations, universities, government departments, etc. Annual results: 122 additional Connectors 108 additional Newcomers 103 additional International Students 112 additional Young and Emerging Talent(including recent grads and laid-off workers) 109 Jobs found-Immigrants-38; International Students-39; YEP 32</p> <p>Program Totals to March 31, 2015: Participants - 1345 Connectors - 763 Jobs Found - 556</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 above – included in the Partnership's contribution to the Province's Workforce Table of the Future.</p>
	<p>1. Review HRM policies, strategies, facilities and programs to ensure they are inclusive of diverse communities.</p>	<p>The African Nova Scotian Integration Office will collaborate with Human Resources designates to select the appropriate consultant to oversee the Employment System Review (ESR). This review will provide an in-depth assessment of HRM policies, practices, and systems and their implementation to identify barriers and determine the effectiveness of the organization's Employment Equity Program and Employment Equity Policy.</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. Meeting held with Mikmaq Native Friendship Centre in April 2014 - their focus now is apprenticeship programs. HRM will follow up again this quarter.</p> <p>Jan 2015 - Contract was established last Spring with the Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre. Human Resources met with staff from the Centre and their hiring program funded by the federal government ended March 31, 2014 so at the time of the meeting they were seeking more program funding. Their specific focus remains on apprenticeship. Human Resources will follow up with them to check on their status.</p> <p>April 2015 - HR presented to ISANS (Immigrant Services Association of NS) this quarter on HRM's recruitment practices in order to facilitate their application process with the municipality. HR is also represented on the Disability Starts Here symposium planning committee that addresses employability for individuals with disabilities - HRM is a partner with this organization.</p>	

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
	Build a welcoming and inclusive environment for underrepresented groups.	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>The African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration Office (ANSAIO) continues to work collaboratively with the African Nova Scotian and Visible Minority Women’s Network employee group to enhance talent development, diversity of the workforce, and employee retention within Halifax Regional Municipality.</p> <p>Members were engaged in a successful January 2015 workshop entitled “Defining our Success – Growing our Careers” which focused on career development planning and self-assessment and involved the participation of a HRM Human Resources representative. Plans are underway for a May session which will include a skill identification and development component.</p> <p>In March, staff of ANSAIO worked in collaboration with the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) to offer the workshop, “Making Our City Culturally Competent” (March) to external stakeholders.</p> <p>ANSAIO continues to provide support to the Racially Visible Employee Caucus (RVEC) through a presence at RVEC meetings and offering assistance in addressing issues directly related to employment and career advancement within the structure of HRM.</p> <p>The ANSAIO, in collaboration with Municipal Operations (MOPS) and the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB), has organized an African Nova Scotian Youth Event to expose 20-24 high school youth to employment opportunities in Horticulture in a hands-on, job-shadowing and training format, making in-roads for possible HRM summer employment in this area. This event will take place in several MOPS greenhouses in April 2015.</p> <p>ANSAIO staff will work with LIP to facilitate “Get to Know your Municipality” (April) for all Business Unit (BU) service providers who work directly with citizens. Staff will also facilitate an interactive workshop on diversity and inclusion for Active Living Coordinators in the Parks and Recreation BU entitled, “Physical Activity, Sport, Recreation and Healthy Well-Being: What’s intersectionality got to do with it?” (April).</p>
		4. Explore new opportunities for underrepresented groups, like youth, to link to employment opportunities.	<p>The Mayor’s Welcome Reception for First Year International Students was hosted at Pier 21 (cosponsored by the Halifax Partnership). More than 200 students attended the event from Halifax’s universities and community colleges.</p> <p>The Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) was officially launched in September to help facilitate immigrant settlement, integration and retention. LIP will create/identify opportunities for cross-sector collaboration among newcomer service providers.</p> <p>HRM is continuing its internship program in 2014/2015.</p> <p>Jan 2015 - The African Nova Scotian and visible minority Women Network is active and a career development event was recently held for this group. Bridging the Gap Internship Program is going strong with the 2nd cohort; the first cohort ended December 2014. HRM is about to set up the 3rd round of interns within the organization pending CAO’s approval on the number of positions available this year.</p>
	HRM will become an “Employer of Choice” serving as a model for the business community.	5. Implement the HRM People Plan.	<p>In progress. In 14/15 Human Resources will complete deliverables and make revisions to the Plan to extend the strategy out to 2016/17. Work on revised deliverables is in the planning stages and will begin in 15/16.</p>
	Create a unique international city brand for Halifax that reflects our best qualities and	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. Over 20,000 residents contributed to the engagement process.</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>

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
Create a unique international city brand for Halifax.	what we aspire to be.	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.	The launch of the brand included the website www.Halifaxdefined.ca, this website is a showcase for the new brand and outlines how the new brand was chosen and what the new brand means to the community. The city is rolling out the brand in a systematic way. Buses are being re-painted and community signs are being replaced with the new brand. This goes a long way to achieve community buy-in. The Greater Halifax Partnership changed its name to Halifax Partnership and is now aligned to the new Halifax brand.
	Move Halifax from Good to Great -- Live the brand!	3. Implement the Brand Strategy that: - Provides clear and consistent messages to a local, national and international marketplace; - Supports trade, investment and labour market development; - Increases the number of businesses actively seeking customers in international markets; - Builds business and citizen confidence locally; and, - Inspires a culture that guarantees Halifax's delivery of an exceptional experience.	The Bold Promise is an important, and new, initiative which will positively contribute to imperative cultural change in our city and province. The Bold Promise is the evolution of the My Halifax Pledge and similar initiatives developed by other partners in the city. The Bold Halifax movement has over 14 organization that have signed on as Bold endorsers. The Bold promise is the evolution of the Halifax Pledge that the Halifax Partnership launched last year at our annual State of the Economy event. The Bold Promise currently has over 500 people who have signed the promise. Boldhalifax.ca is a website designed to showcase all the bold things happening in our city.
	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.	Conducted: Jobs created & Retained: 541+ 150 SmartBusiness retention visits (diagnostic surveys) 147 business follow-up consultations > 40 face-to-face meetings with action team members YTD Generated 390 business referrals (84% successfully closed)
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.		The Partnership presented the 3rd Halifax Index at the State of the Economy Conference in May 2014. Details and copies can be found at http://bit.ly/1txxMxB The 4th Annual Halifax Index will be presented to the community in June 2015.	
1. Mobilize community stakeholders to collectively respond to and/or support immediate threats and opportunities.		May 27, 2014 – Dongdu International Group (DDI), a Shanghai-based international real estate, high technology and lifestyle oriented company, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) and Greater Halifax Partnership (the Partnership) formalizing intentions to carry out a multi-phased plan of investment and development in Halifax and other areas of Nova Scotia. The Partnership has partnered with NSBI, NSCC, Waterfront Development Corp., Dalhousie University, Halifax Gateway Council, Journeymen and OTCNS to work collaboratively to promote the Oceans Sector. Visit oceaninnovators.com to learn more about their work to date.	

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
<p>MAXIMIZE GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES 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>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 Oceans Committee (morphed from the Major Project Table) focused on the collaboration and alignment of stakeholders on the benefits of building an innovative oceans sector in Nova Scotia.</p> <p>The Partnership has also partnered with NSBI, NSCC, Waterfront Development Corp., Dalhousie University, Halifax Gateway Council, Journeymen and OTCNS to work collaboratively to promote the Oceans Sector. Visit oceaninnovators.com to learn more about their work to date.</p> <p>The Partnership has also delivered more than 20 presentations to various organizations and groups to increase awareness of the benefits of the shipbuilding project and major projects.</p> <p>Maximizing the mega projects in Atlantic Canada is one of the top three priorities of the Halifax Gateway Council. The Halifax Gateway Council prepared a map of the large scale projects underway or planned within the Atlantic Canadian Region with a current combined investment of approximately \$122B. These projects are from a variety of sectors: energy, mining, construction and transportation. More information can be found at http://www.halifaxgateway.com/en/home/megaprojectsmmap.aspx</p>
		<p>3. Implement an attraction and retention strategy for Regional and Head Offices to/in Halifax.</p>	<p>On April 14th, the Partnership hosted an event to release head/regional office research & best practices for attracting and retaining HROs. >50 HRO businesses visited. Marketing and engagement is on-going.</p> <p>For additional information on the Partnership's Head Office Attraction and Retention Initiative and HRO Success Stories go to: http://bit.ly/1EkTvM6</p>
		<p>4. Work with the Halifax Gateway Council to coordinate activities to improve Gateway efficiency and use.</p>	<p>The Partnership is a core partner of the Halifax Gateway Council and manages the Council through a management services agreement. The business development funnel for the Logistics Park is managed by the Halifax Logistics Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 13 qualified leads in funnel. • 1 lot closed -- Hours Investments Ltd., a warehouse and distribution facility located on John Savage Avenue • During Halifax Port Days in September 2014 a celebration event was held for the Armour Transportation Facility which increased its existing facility by 100,000 square feet. • Nova Cold was recently purchased by Brookfield. The Halifax Logistics Park Committee continues to work with Nova Cold on opportunities. <p>Air Route Development Fund: No commitment in the 2015/2016 Province of NS Budget. This will remain a priority for the Halifax Gateway Council in 2015-16. Held a Toronto Awareness building event for 100+ attendees in partnership with the Port of Halifax, CN, NSBI and the Halifax Stanfield International Airport. Coordinated and delivered a significant trade show presence including a reception for 100+ participants at Cargo Logistics Canada in Vancouver. Partners included: HPA, HIAA, CN, Oceanex, NSBI and ACOA. Coordinated and delivered a celebration of Armour Transportation's expansion to their HLP facility – held during Halifax Port Days. Hosted joint event welcoming Europe Air post to the Community (offering direct seasonal service to Glasgow and Paris 2014/2015 year). Supported the Mid Atlantic Trade Show in Iceland – Partners: HIAA and Nova Scotia Tourism Agency. Updated and Delivered new Mega Project map (\$122B)</p> <p>Success Stories in 2014/2015: Armour Transportation, Richmond Terminals, Survival Systems Limited Delivered a Energy Gateway Map - distributed post show to 2000+ attendees at the Cargo Logistics Show Developed FTZ marketing materials</p> <p>Through the Air Gateway Committee provided business development and stakeholder coordination support for the following: Westjet - new service to Glasgow Scotland secured Iceland Air Executives site visit to Halifax Trade show presence and participation Halifax Port Days Created and maintained a strong social media presence – Twitter account for the Halifax Gateway has over 1000 followers</p>

GOALS (5)	OBJECTIVES (17)	YEAR 3-5 ACTIONS (48)	YEAR 3 - STATUS UPDATES - Q4
		<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.</p> <p>We are currently managing the following business development funnel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 212 Halifax Business Case Brochures generated at WHYHalifax.ca • 5,299 whyHalifax .pdf downloads • 9 Requests for Information (RFI) - A request by a third party looking for information to support the decision to open an office in Halifax. • 39 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. • 4 Prospects – Companies who have shortlisted Halifax for their investment. • 7 Closed - Companies who have successfully opened an operation and hired at least 1 employee in Halifax. (total of 158 jobs) <p>Aftercare services provided to previously closed projects by SmartBusiness Visit whyhalifax.ca, to view the Partnership's suite of investment attraction tools.</p>
		<p>6. Work with the Province, GHP, Destination Halifax and others to maximize opportunities presented by the new convention centre.</p>	<p>On November 7th, the Partnership and Trade Centre Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work collaboratively and partner on strategic opportunities that support the goals of both organizations and economic growth opportunities for our City.</p>
		<p>7. Improve the connection and collaboration between research organizations and business.</p>	<p>Over the summer months, The Halifax Ecosystem has continued to evolve with the support and guidance of Cisco and IBM, and T2VC. This new, collaborative approach to economic development aims to increase engagement from all sectors of our community and get to action and solutions sooner on key economic and social issues. The Halifax Ecosystem is the way we can experiment together and take action on big ideas that will drive innovation and prosperity in Halifax and our region. In our role as curator of the Ecosystem, the Partnership held the first Halifax Ecosystem Café on September 10th where we launched four working groups focused on: changing attitudes, attracting and retaining talent, building an attractive and vibrant regional centre and promoting entrepreneurship – priorities that emerged from the Ivany Report and the State of the Economy Conference. This was the first of several Ecosystem Cafés planned for this year.</p> <p>In October Cisco hosted an all-day Ecosystem meeting in Toronto with 8 communities from across Canada. The intent was for each community to share successes and challenges so there would be ongoing collaboration. The event was a good opportunity for like-minded communities to meet each other and then continue to work together on the common goal of economic prosperity using the ecosystem model. Communities that attended were Halifax, Moncton, Saint John, Sault Saint Marie, Windsor, London, Toronto, and Kingston.</p> <p>In December the Attitude working group launched Boldhalifax.ca and the Bold Promise. Boldhalifax.ca is a website designed to showcase all the bold things happening in our city. The Bold Halifax movement has over 14 organization that have signed on as Bold endorsers. The Bold promise is the evolution of the Halifax Pledge that the Halifax Partnership launched last year at our annual State of the Economy event. The Bold Promise currently has over 500 people who have signed the promise.</p>

Highlights

- **2015 is expected to be a strong year for Halifax** – The Conference Board of Canada is forecasting a year of strong overall growth for the Halifax economy, led by the start of construction on the Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships at the Halifax Shipyard in September.
- **Employment growth is driven by full-time gains** – Over 5,000 net new jobs have been added since this time last year. This represents 6,000 additional full time jobs and 1,000 fewer part time jobs. This means more stable, better paying jobs for Haligonians.
- **Offshore energy developments yield mixed results** – Deep Panuke’s estimated recoverable reserves have been significantly reduced. Its economic impact will be diminished as it changes to a seasonal venture. Looking longer-term, Shell’s major investment in offshore oil will be ramping up. The project is proceeding ahead of schedule; the company is planning to start two exploratory wells in the latter half of this year.
- **Purchasing power is on the rise** – Average weekly earnings show consistently high growth in the city. Coupled with low growth in consumer prices, this means much more purchasing power for Haligonians. This growth is likely due to the shift towards full time employment.

Current Economic Indicators for Halifax	Period	YTD 2014	YTD 2015	% Change
Labour Markets				
Real GDP at basic prices (2007 \$ millions)	Annual	18,947	19,517(f)	3.0%
Population (Thousands)	Annual	414.3	418(f)	0.9%
Employment (Thousands)	Jan-Mar	221.8	226.7	2.2%
Unemployment rate (%)	Jan-Mar	6.3%	6.2%	-0.1
Labour force (Thousands)	Jan-Mar	236.9	241.9	2.1%
Participation rate (%)	Jan-Mar	69.2%	69.8%	0.6
Consumer Markets				
Average weekly earnings (Current \$)	Jan-Mar	833	866	4.0%
Consumer price index (2002 = 100)	Jan-Mar	126.9	127.0	0.2
Retail sales (Current \$ millions)	Jan-Feb	1,108	1,073	-3.2%
Aircraft Passengers (Thousands)	Jan-Mar	768	764	-0.5%
Cruise ship passengers (Thousands)	Jan-Mar	0.0	0.0	-
Containerized Cargo (Thousands TEUs)	Jan-Mar	97.8	89.4	-8.6%
Housing and Construction Markets				
Housing starts	Jan-Mar	186	86	-53.8%
Housing resales	Jan-Mar	888	866	-2.5%
Value of building permits (Current \$ millions)	Jan-Feb	65.3	108.4	66.1%
Non-residential construction (2007 \$ millions)	Jan-Mar	101.7	89.1	-12.4%

(f) - Forecasted Data

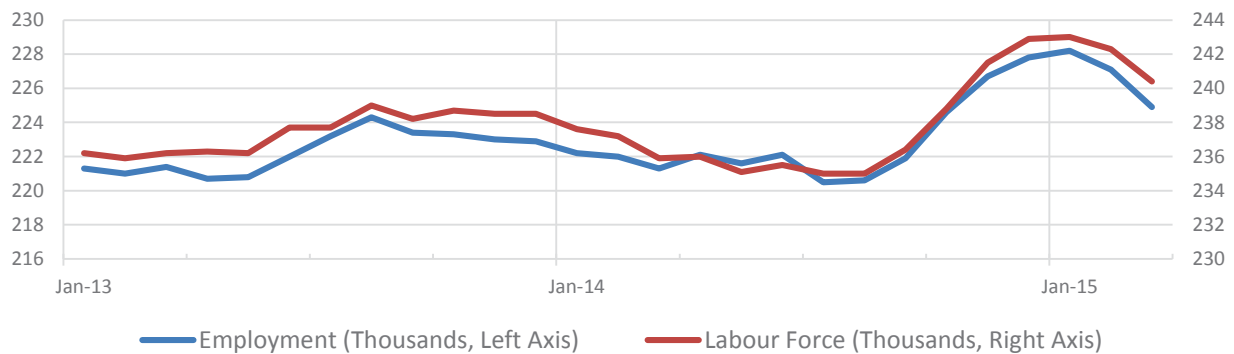
Sources: Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Conference Board of Canada, Halifax International Airport Authority, Port of Halifax

Economic Snapshot

As data begins to trickle in for 2015, signs point to an improving economy for Halifax, though there are many potential opportunities and risks. Early forecasts by the Conference Board of Canada predict strong GDP growth while job numbers from Statistics Canada have shown significant employment growth. Job growth, especially full time growth, puts Halifax in a strong position starting off the year. Offshore energy developments show mixed results, with Deep Panuke reducing its expected gas reserves in the short term and Shell’s oil developments taking off in the long term. The building and construction sector showed weakness this quarter, with high investment levels, but low levels of building construction activity when compared to last year. Wages in Halifax continue to grow well above the rate of inflation, though this has not yet translated to the retail market.

Overall employment has grown by 2.2% since last year, with close to 5,000 net new jobs since Q1 2014, mostly in the latter half of the year. The growth has also been entirely driven by full time job gains. There are 6,000 more full time positions and 1,000 fewer part-time positions now than in Q1 last year. These changes in total employment have been closely mirrored by movements in the labour force, leading to a stable unemployment rate. Halifax’s overall unemployment rate receded during early 2014 and has remained stable around 6% for the past 12 months. Though the rate is relatively unchanged, growth in employment suggests more opportunities – especially full time opportunities – for those looking to build their career in Halifax.

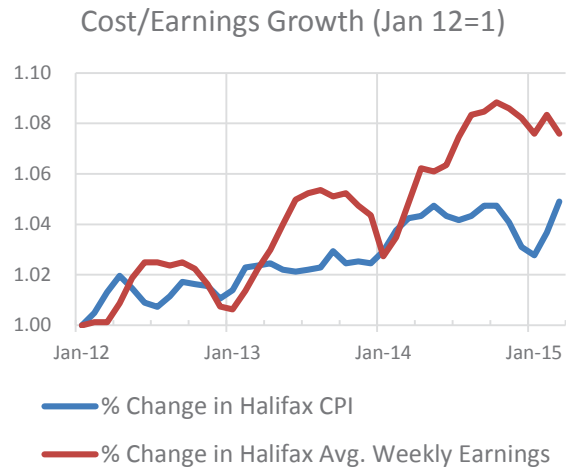
Halifax Labour Statistics, 2013-15



Offshore oil developments continue as both Shell and BP work on their investments; each company is investing over \$1b in the future of Nova Scotia’s offshore energy. Shell’s Shelburne Basin project has completed its seismic work a season ahead of schedule. The company is planning to do its seabed survey and – pending regulatory approval – start two exploratory wells in the second half of 2015. On the natural gas side, things look less rosy. Recent troubles at the Deep Panuke offshore facility have significantly impacted its natural gas reserve estimates. Encana announced the project’s reserves have been reduced by as much as 200 billion cubic feet, or roughly half its expected volume. The company stated that it will be retaining the lifetime of the project by switching to seasonal operations. This will mean a reduced economic impact from the project.

Results from the construction sector are mixed, with a high levels of investment and major project activity but low levels of building construction. Looking at the last 24 months, building permits have increased by 17.9%, while non-residential construction is down 19.3% and housing starts are down 9.7%. However, this data does not include engineering work and major projects like the resurfacing of the MacDonald Bridge. Annual major project spending in Halifax climbed to a record-high \$1.5 billion in 2014; the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC) will be releasing its updated analysis in late May. Construction sector jobs in Halifax have declined over the past 12 months, from 15,600 to 14,600. Non-residential construction has shown some impressive growth in the industrial sector (+56% year-to-date), but Commercial and Institutional construction are both down (-24% and -27% respectively).

Haligonians saw a notable increase in their purchasing power this year; though retail sales have not followed suit. Average weekly earnings in the city have increased by an impressive 4.0% compared to Q1 last year, while the Consumer Price Index – an indicator of the growth in living costs – hasn’t budged (+0.2 points). This increase in earnings is likely due to the shift from part time to full time labour. As more workers take on full time positions, salaries and wages increase as well. The growth in earnings has not yet translated into additional retail sales, with sales in this sector falling 3.2% year-to-date up to February. This lag in retail sales may help to explain why consumer prices remain low.



As we look to the near future, cutting of first steel on the Arctic Offshore Patrol Ships stands out as a major milestone for Halifax’s economy. Irving Shipbuilding will be starting construction on the project this September, which means growth in the manufacturing sector and a steady ramping up of employment in skilled trades. While the build up to peak activity will take time, there will be a noticeable increase in shipbuilding activity this year.

2015 is expected to be an overall positive year for the Halifax economy, despite some setbacks in the natural gas sector. Organizations such as the Conference Board have expressed highly positive forecasts for GDP, though there are still some uncertainties. Fundamentals within the city look strong with growth in employment and a focus on full time employment growth. However, offshore development will affect economic progress this year and its direction is unclear. There are good reasons to have an optimistic view for 2015.

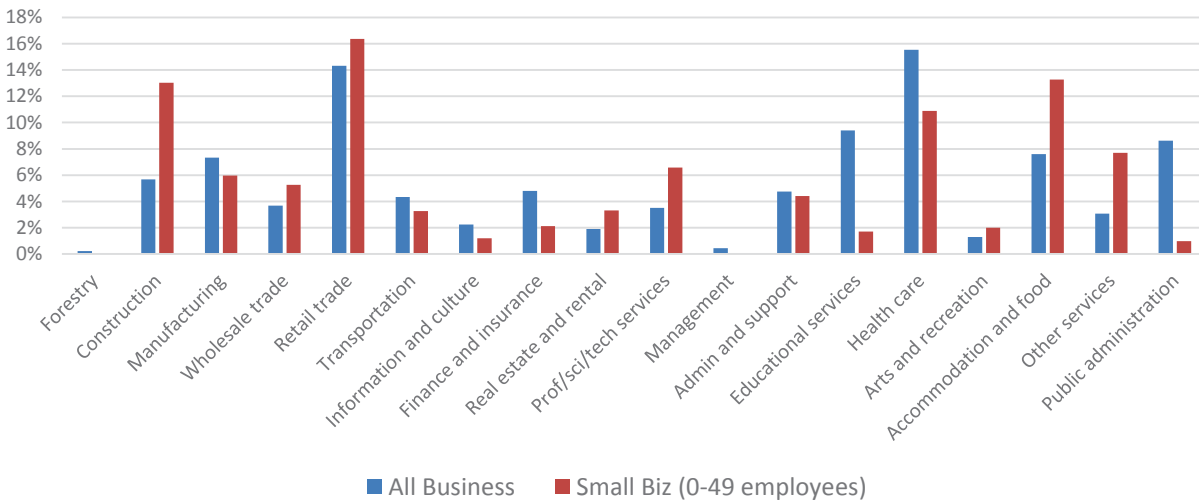
Special Topic: The Importance of Small Business

Small Businesses are a big part of Halifax’s economy; just over 28% of workers work for companies with 50 or fewer employees. These companies help drive the economy with everything from lifestyle businesses to creative new start-ups. Growing our economy is about encouraging businesses to grow, but also recognizing that even the biggest business today, started out small.

While we often hear about the goings-on at the big banks and large companies, it’s crucial to note that our economic ecosystem requires more than just big players. For every large business creating and marketing a product, there are a host of small businesses in the supply chain, providing services for its employees, and trying out their own new ideas. According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), the 5-year survival rate for SMEs in most sectors is 50%. Small businesses are an important part of Halifax’s economy and should be a priority in economic development.

Small businesses also focus on different industries than large businesses. Key sectors such as Professional Services, Real Estate, and Construction stand out as industries where small businesses can excel. Small businesses are also more commonly lifestyle businesses such as restaurants (Accommodation) or boutiques (Retail Trade). These businesses are an important part of the province’s industrial composition and provide many of the services we enjoy.

Share of Employment by Industry in Nova Scotia



In order to help small businesses succeed in Nova Scotia, they enjoy substantial tax savings in the form of the Small Business tax rate. This provides eligible companies a rate reduction of 13% on their corporate income taxes for the first \$350,000 of profit. They also enjoy a similar 4% tax rate reduction at the federal level, with plans in the most recent budget to increase the credit to 6% by 2019. Programs of both the provincial and federal governments make it easier for local companies to access the resources they need to succeed. The Small Business Development Program, Small Business Financing Program, Early Stage Commercialization Fund, START, Graduate to Opportunity Program, and many more are all focused on helping small businesses. These resources can help companies with any part of their operations, from bringing a new product to market, to developing export markets, to building a business plan, even hiring recent graduates.

NGOs have also taken up the cause, with groups like CEED and Entrepreneur’s Forum offering training and mentoring for new business owners. Groups like Volta Labs provide space and opportunities for tech start-ups looking to make their business work in Halifax. There are also many small business advocates, such as the Halifax Chamber of Commerce and the CFIB, that are striving to make it easier for small companies to do business.

The Halifax Partnership is playing its part. Our SmartBusiness Program helps business owners diagnose their barriers to growth and connect them to the resources they need to grow their company. By leveraging our connections to government and the private sector, we can help businesses navigate the solutions – and contacts – that are right for them.

Small businesses play a critical role in Halifax’s business ecosystem and help drive economic growth. They are an important part of any city and help make our city a greater place to live, work, and play.

The Halifax Partnership

The Halifax Partnership is Halifax’s economic development organization. We help keep, grow and get business, talent and investment in Halifax. We do this through leadership on economic issues, our core programs, our partnerships across all sectors, and by marketing Halifax to the world.

If you have any questions or concerns about this document, its methodology, or how its indices are measured, please contact the Partnership at info@halifaxpartnership.com for further details.

**Attachment 3: Historical Population, Employment and
Commercial Tax Base Figures (Halifax, NS and Canada | 2009-2014)**

Table 1							
Halifax							
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Population	Population (thousands)	393,692	398,259	402,433	406,757	409,974	414,398
	Annual Change		1.2%	1.0%	1.1%	0.8%	1.1%
Employment							
	Employment (Thousands)	214.6	216.5	219.2	221.7	222.3	223.3
	Full Time Employment (Thousands)	177.4	176.9	178.7	179.7	180.6	183.0
	Unemployment Rate	6.5%	6.5%	6.1%	6.2%	6.5%	6.1%
	Participation Rate	71.0	70.7	70.4	70.3	69.9	69.2
	Youth Unemployment Rate	13.1%	12.5%	14.0%	13.0%	15.2%	13.2%
Commercial¹ Tax Base	Commercial Tax Base	\$5.481 billion	\$5.739 billion	\$6.101 billion	\$6.507 billion	\$6.903 billion	\$7.353 billion

Table 2

Nova Scotia		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Population	Population (Thousands)	938,194	942,073	944,469	944,835	942,930	942,668
Employment	Employment (Thousands)	449.5	451.3	453.0	457.6	452.6	447.6
	Full Time Employment (Thousands)	368.8	365.3	367.7	368.2	364.8	363.7
	Unemployment Rate	9.2%	9.6%	9.0%	9.1%	9.1%	9.0%
	Participation Rate	64.2%	64.3%	63.9%	64.4%	63.7%	62.8%
	Youth Unemployment Rate	17.6%	16.3%	16.7%	18.6%	18.3%	17.8%

Table 3

Canada		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Population	Population (Thousands)	33,628,571	34,005,274	34,342,780	34,752,128	35,154,279	35,540,419
Employment	Employment (Thousands)	16,727.6	16,964.3	17,221.0	17,438.0	17,691.1	17,802.2
	Full Time Employment (Thousands)	13,502.6	13,647.2	13,900.9	14,133.2	14,314.2	14,369.9
	Unemployment Rate	8.3%	8.1%	7.5%	7.3%	7.1%	6.9%
	Participation Rate	67.1%	66.9%	66.7%	66.5%	66.5%	66.0%
	Youth Unemployment Rate	15.4%	14.9%	14.3%	14.4%	13.7%	13.5%

Sources:

Statistics Canada. *Table 282-0129 – Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by census metropolitan area based on 2011 census boundaries, sex and age group, annual (persons unless otherwise noted)*, CANSIM (database). (Accessed: 2014-02-03)

Statistics Canada. *Table 282-0002 – Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by sex and detailed age group, annual (persons x 1,000)*, CANSIM (database). (Accessed: 2014-02-03)

Statistics Canada. *Table 051-0001 – Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, Canada, provinces and territories, annual (persons unless otherwise noted)*, CANSIM (database). (Accessed: 2014-10-29)

¹ Note that the taxation figures reflected in this report differ from those presented in the Q3 report to Council. These figures are felt to be a more accurate accounting of taxation revenues. The figures in this report are based on the total commercial assessment base, which includes all Taxable Commercial (non-residential) properties (Class 02) in the municipality, as listed on the annual Tax Roll from PVSC. This measure is more inclusive (than the general rate option) and is not as impacted by policy decisions, such as whether a tax agreement is used for a particular business. The General Rate Commercial Assessment Base (used in prior reports to Council), shown in the budget book, excludes “Class 02” properties that do not pay the general rate. Many of these properties are owned by organizations that pay through tax agreements, e.g. Imperial Oil (2010 through 2013), Irving Shipyard, HIAA, Halifax Water, etc.

CORE STRATEGIES & FUNCTIONS	Deliverables	Aligns to Economic Strategy	Performance Indicators	2014-15 Year-End Cumulative Results (Unaudited)
<p>1.1 Attract and Grow Business and Quality Jobs</p> <p>. . . To grow the business tax base of Halifax</p> <p>. . . To grow the employment and income levels in Halifax</p>	<p>a. Connect local “existing” business to the resources and services (labour market info, business financing, etc.) they need to be more competitive at home, across the country and internationally.</p>	<p>Talent - Objective 1 Maximize Growth - Objectives 1 & 2</p>	<p>Conduct: >150 SMEs (<100 employees) retention visits (diagnostic surveys) >200 business follow-up consultations >40 face-to-face meetings with action team members Generate >150 business referrals Successfully close 75% of issues identified Annual Report to highlight impact of visitations including # Jobs Created and maintained</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED Jobs created & Retained: 541 150 SmartBusiness retention visits (diagnostic surveys) 147 business follow-up consultations >40 face-to-face meetings with action team members YTD Generated 390 business referrals (84% successfully closed) SmartBusiness 2014-15 Annual Report attached</p>
	<p>b. Implement the Head and Regional Office (HRO) Program to attract and retain HROs to/in Halifax.</p>	<p>Maximize Growth - Objectives 1 & 2</p>	<p>> 50 HRO businesses visited Support NSBI on the 10 leads generated from the 2014 HRO Economic Impact Study</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED • April 14th - released the head/regional office research & best practices for attracting and retaining HROs. • >50 HRO businesses visited. Marketing and engagement is on-going. For additional information on the Partnership's Head Office Attraction and Retention Initiative and HRO Success Stories go to: http://bit.ly/1EKtVM6</p>
	<p>c. Implement the "Celebrate Business Program" for the Mayor and Halifax Regional Council to demonstrate HRM is open for business.</p>	<p>Business Climate - Objective 1</p>	<p>Host Celebrate Business Event - Fall 2014 (Mayor is keynote) Coordinate 8 Mayor onsite visitations to companies</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED The Partnership has defined and leads the implementation of the Mayor's Celebrate Business Program. The Mayor has visited, hosted and/or presented at the following: April 14 - HRO Economic Impact Release April 16 to 18 - Atlantic Mayor's Congress in PEI (the Partnership Presented) April 28 - Web.com Breakfast May 22 - 3rd Annual State of the Economy Conference and Halifax Index June 17 - Partnership's Business Leaders' Roundtable July 25 - Site Visit to IH Mathers August 6 - Site Visit to Atlantic CAT September 11 - the Partnership Board Orientation September 13 - Mayor's Welcome Reception for first year international students to Halifax (co-sponsored by the Partnership) November 13 - CNIB December 1 - NSCAD February 12th - LED Roadway Lighting February 18th – Information Session - Canada's Ambassador to China March 25 – GMI – Forbes Asia</p>

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	<p>d. Make connections with local business organizations such as Business Improvement Districts and Business Associations to support the development of strategies and action plans to attract and retain businesses in their district. Implementation of action plans are the responsibility of the business group.</p>	<p>Maximize Growth - Objectives 1 & 2</p>	<p>Support provided on attraction and retention strategies Ongoing support for using GHP's GIS tool and WhyHalifax.ca</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED Between Q1 & Q3 8 meetings held with BIDs outlining opportunities to connect and support on attraction and retention strategies. In Q4 met with 3 BIDs. Agenda items include: 1. Update on SmartBusiness, HRO activity and regulatory environment. 2. GIS and WHY Halifax Update 3. Ecosystem Update</p>
	<p>e. Through work with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations on the Access to Business (A2B) project, identify opportunities to streamline regulatory requirements or processes.</p>	<p>Business Climate - Objective 1</p>	<p>Participation on Service Nova Scotia Municipal Relations A2B Advisory Committee</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED Results from the Partnership's SmartBusiness Program are shared quarterly with Halifax Government Relations and External Affairs Division and the Office of the CAO. Company common issues specific to Municipal services are identified and shared within the report. The Partnership also sits as a member of the SNSMR A2B Advisory Committee focused on improving municipal/provincial regulatory or service improvement.</p>
	<p>f. Increase business community's engagement and involvement in economic growth.</p>	<p>Business Climate - Objective 5</p>	<p>> 90% private sector investment renewal in GHP demonstrating private sector interest in and support of economic development outcomes</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED As of March 31, there are 124 active investors in the Partnership. 4 non-renewals for the year: Collins Barrow, Doctors NS, Shell Canada and Rogers which represents an adjusted 96% renewal rate. 15 new investors, a 13% increase. They are: • Lockheed Martin • BDO • Cisco • I.H. Mathers • IBM • Lois Lane Communications • Hilton/Silverbirch • Journeyman Films • Right Some Good • Revolve • Scotian Materials • Word Right Career & HR Consulting • Napkin Creative • Value Improvement Consulting • eOlio</p>

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	<p>g. Represent HRM staff on the Sheet Harbour and Area Chamber of Commerce and Civic Affairs Economic Development Committee.</p>		<p>Provide community economic development support to the Sheet Harbour Area Chamber of Commerce in support of their community plan. Provide on-line platform via GHP website to share results and invite feedback and additional input from the March 29, 2014 Community Economic Development Strategy planning session for Eastern HRM. Continue to collaborate with communities and all 3 levels of government to plan and implement next steps.</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 14th -Bonnie Sutherland of the NS Nature Trust met with the Chamber and invited guests to discuss the Nature Trust’s proposal of acquiring and managing some of the islands off the Eastern Shore. The area is represents a remote and wild group of pristine coastal islands and headlands encompassing over 6700 acres of diverse coastal habitats. • July 14th - meeting with the Eastern HRM Region Communities Economic Development Network - Steering Committee included representation from Sheet Harbour. • July 30th - a meeting held in Sheet Harbour to brief elected representatives, as well as representative from the various local organizations with an economic development focus, about the Bay of Islands STEP application, and to seek their ongoing support for the project. There was a general discussion about how best to ensure that the outcome of the STEP process would receive future implementation support. • Aug 1st - meeting with Eastern HRM Region Communities Economic Development Network Steering Committee included representation from Sheet Harbour • Nov 4 - Chezzetcook Health and Wellness Centre - NSERDT and GHP met to discuss strategy for supporting this opportunity. Agreed the initiative must be led by the community. Both organizations will play a supporting role such in facilitating meetings and making connections to needed stakeholders and resources. • Nov 17 - Eastern HRM Region Communities Economic Development Network Steering Committee - Meeting held at Memory Lane. Status update and next steps discussed. Minutes posted on GHP website under Community Economic Development. • Jan 28 - Met with Tom McLinnis, Sheet Harbour Chamber of Commerce, re Town Square Project on the waterfront at the Sheet Harbour Falls. The Planning Committee is ready to retain the services of a qualified company to complete the planning process, requisite engineering and design. • Feb 4 - Connected with community working group to offer support as they begin work on ACOA’s first mainland Nova Scotia STEP process, focused on developing a sustainable actionable plan for the Bay of Islands. • Jan 24 - Halifax Partnership attended the Bay of Islands funding announcement. • March 15-Year-end report for the Eastern HRM Region Communities Economic Development Network <p>For more information on Eastern HRM Communities’ Economic Development Network go to http://www.halifaxpartnership.com/en/home/get-connected/community-economic-development/eastern-hrm.aspx</p>
	<p>h. Position the Halifax Business Case to attract high value, high potential “new” business investments to generate active investment attraction leads.</p>	<p>Maximize Growth - Objectives 1 & 2</p>	<p>Provide business case information in response to requests for investment related information (>24) Generate >10 qualified business development leads Successfully close two leads (2)</p>	<p>The Partnership collaborates with Nova Scotia Business Incorporated (NSBI) and other partners to attract and retain business investment. 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"> • 212 Halifax Business Case Brochures generated at WHYHalifax.ca • 5,299 whyHalifax .pdf downloads • 9 Requests for Information (RFI) - A request by a third party looking for information to support the decision to open an office in Halifax. • 39 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. • 4 Prospects – Companies who have shortlisted Halifax for their investment. • 7 Closed - Companies who have successfully opened an operation and hired at least 1 employee in Halifax. (total of 158 jobs) <p>Aftercare services provided to previously closed projects Visit whyhalifax.ca, to view the Partnership’s suite of investment attraction tools.</p>

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	<p>i. Leverage and maximize growth opportunities within the Halifax Gateway through the day to day management of the Year Four Plan for their five-year strategy. Activities include marketing and awareness, identification of business development opportunities impacting air, port and logistics, including the Halifax Logistics Park (Burnside).</p>	<p>Maximize Growth - Objective 2</p>	<p>Acquire one major international tenant for the Halifax Logistics Park Obtain support for the Air Route Development Fund Implement 6 collaborative projects with Gateway partners</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED The business development funnel for the Logistics Park is managed by the Halifax Logistics Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 13 qualified leads in funnel. • 1 lot closed – Hours Investments Ltd., a warehouse and distribution facility located on John Savage Avenue • During Halifax Port Days in September 2014 a celebration event was held for the Armour Transportation Facility which increased its existing facility by 100,000 square feet. • Nova Cold was recently purchased by Brookfield. The Halifax Logistics Park Committee continues to work with Nova Cold on opportunities. <p>Air Route Development Fund: No commitment in the 2015/2016 Province of NS Budget. This will remain a priority for the Halifax Gateway Council in 2015-16.</p> <p>Held a Toronto Awareness building event for 100+ attendees in partnership with the Port of Halifax, CN, NSBI and the Halifax Stanfield International Airport Coordinated and delivered a significant trade show presence including a reception for 100+ participants at Cargo Logistics Canada in Vancouver. Partners included: HPA, HIAA, CN, Oceanex, NSBI and ACOA Coordinated and delivered a celebration of Armour Transportation's expansion to their HLP facility – held during Halifax Port Days Hosted joint event welcoming Europe Air post to the Community (offering direct seasonal service to Glasgow and Paris 2014/2015 year) Supported the Mid Atlantic Trade Show in Iceland – Partners: HIAA and Nova Scotia Tourism Agency</p> <p>Updated and Delivered new Mega Project map (\$122B) Success Stories in 2014/2015: Armour Transportation, Richmond Terminals, Survival Systems Limited Delivered a Energy Gateway Map - distributed post show to 2000+ attendees at the Cargo Logistics Show Developed FTZ marketing materials</p> <p>Through the Air Gateway Committee provided business development and stakeholder coordination support for the following: Westjet - new service to Glasgow Scotland secured Iceland Air Executives site visit to Halifax Trade show presence and participation Halifax Port Days Created and maintained a strong social media presence – Twitter account for the Halifax Gateway has over 1000 followers</p>
	<p>j. Participation in the Consider Canada Cities Alliance which provide the opportunity to align our HRM's interests with 10 of Canada's largest cities</p>	<p>Maximize Growth - Objective 2</p>	<p>Chair and provide secretariat support to December 31. Participate in 2 CCCA International Trade missions. Connect international ambassadors and Canadian Embassy staff to Halifax stakeholders and resources (>3) Attain over 100 new international business contacts Generate 3 prospective leads</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospective Leads: 2 company leads; 6 trade-related leads • Partnership President and CEO was CCCA Chair for 2014; Partnership provided secretariat support • September 29 - Cohosted with NSBI a CETA Information Session with EU Ambassador to Canada, Marie-Anne Coninx. • November - Partnership participated in CCCA's European Investment Mission. • March 2015 - Ambassador Coninx visited Halifax in preparation for a mission to Halifax by representatives of over 20 EU member states in April 2015. • March 2015 - Partnership, joined by NSBI, participated in CCCA's China Investment Mission. • Prospective Leads: Working with NSBI on follow-up with all contacts

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	k. Participation in World Energy Cities Partnership	Maximize Growth - Objective 2	Participate in the OTC/WECP Working Meeting in Houston (May 3-7) Attend the AGM in Stavanger, Norway, August 21-24	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED</p> <p>May 6 to 8 -- Attended WECP Working Meeting in Houston with Mayor Savage August 21 to 24 -- Attended WECP AGM in Stavanger, Norway with Mayor Savage Working with Mayor Savage to communicate Halifax's interest in becoming WECP Presidential City 2015-2017 Early planning to communicate Halifax's interest in hosting WECP AGM in 2016 or 2017 Partnership is now leading the WECP Communications Committee Planning underway for Houston Working Meeting May 4-8, 2015 with Mayor Savage Early planning underway for Rio (October 24-29 2015) AGM</p>
	I. Develop and manage the International Partnerships (formerly Sister Cities)		Host Aberdeen Deputy Provost and Delegation in Halifax (June 2014) (MOU with Aberdeen) Explore an International Partnership with Kiel, Germany Generate 3 prospective leads	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED</p> <p>May 27, 2014 – Dongdu International Group (DDI), a Shanghai-based international real estate, high technology and lifestyle oriented company, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) and Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP) formalizing intentions to carry out a multi-phased plan of investment and development in Halifax and other areas of Nova Scotia.</p> <p>June 22 - 25 - Successfully hosted Aberdeen Inbound Mission. Attendees included: Deputy Mayor/Economic Development/Universities/Private Sector. University and Business one-on-one meetings were set with local community partners/companies. Post visit we are working collaboratively to help them with potentially securing a future ICOE 2016. One of the visiting companies during the mission has returned to Halifax and secured membership with Maritimes Energy and is looking at the viability of a local presence.</p> <p>August 25-27 - Visited Kiel Germany to investigate viability of moving forward with International Partnership Relationship - outcome is to look first at a joint project with Kiel.</p> <p>November 4-8 - Management and delivery of the Mayor's visit to Norfolk Virginia as part of Halifax Norfolk Sister City Committee. Agenda included NATO visit, Mayor of Norfolk, Oceans national Partnership activities.</p> <p>>3 leads have been generated as a result of International Partnership activity.</p>
1.2 INVEST IN TALENT . . . to grow the population of Halifax	a. Strengthen the region's workforce by more effectively matching identified needs and opportunities of local business with available pools of skilled workers.	Talent - Objective 1	Participate as a member of the Province's Workforce of the Future Table Participate as a member of the Local Immigrant Partnership Advisory Committee Partner with LAE and industry for job fairs and Speed Interview sessions used when there is a major lay off by Halifax businesses. Co-host an international student welcome reception in support of HRM's MOU with post-secondary institutions.	<p>The Partnership is a member of: Province's Workforce of the Future Table (completed its work in December) LIP (Local Immigrant Partnership) Advisory Council LIP Economic Integration & Growth sub-committee Advisory Committee convened by Students NS for the planning of the Nova Scotia Youth Employer Awards.</p> <p>> September 13 - Mayor's Welcome Reception for first year international students to Halifax (co-sponsored by GHP)</p>

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	<p>b. Through the ongoing implementation of the Halifax Connector Program increase the business community's involvement in labour market initiatives to attract and retain young professionals and international skilled workers.</p>	<p>Talent - Objective 1</p>	<p>Engage: > 100 additional business leader "Connectors" > 100 additional newcomers >100 international students >100 additional young and emerging talent (including recent grads and laid-off workers)</p>	<p>TARGETS ACHIEVED 122 additional Connectors 108 additional Newcomers 103 additional International Students 112 additional Young and Emerging Talent(including recent grads and laid-off workers) 109 Jobs found-Immigrants-38; International Students-39; YEP 32</p> <p>Program Totals to March 31, 2015: Participants - 1345 Connectors - 763 Jobs Found - 556</p>
	<p>c. Provide advisory services to HRM staff in updating newcomer guides and the development of a Mandarin version of the newcomer guide.</p>	<p>Talent - Objective 1</p>	<p>Advisory services provided upon request.</p>	<p>Not requested.</p>
	<p>d. Working with partners, work towards improved settlement support for international students in an effort to improve retention</p>	<p>Talent - Objective 1</p>	<p>Demonstrated efforts to identify settlement support improvements and work with partners to improve supports.</p>	<p>> Participated in and/or presented to >30 sessions focused on increasing opportunities for youth and/or newcomer attraction and retention and settlement improvements.</p>

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	<p>h. Assist the Municipality in improving the quality and level of service to residents and communities of African descent as it relates to community economic development.</p>	<p>Talent - Objective 2</p>	<p>In collaboration with HRM's Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs Integration provide community economic development support to the ANS community.</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED Actively engaged on >10 projects in the ANS community. Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descendants of Beechville & Beechville Baptist Church - facilitation support for the development of an overall community plan. Action Plan completed.
	<p>i. Work in the ANS Community to facilitate and assist community organizations in the development of the strategic plans and/or project plans.</p>	<p>Talent - Objective 2</p>	<p>Provide facilitation support on >10 projects in the ANS community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Preston Ratepayers Association - facilitation support to revisit current governance model and identify steps for the development of a strategic plan. Currently waiting for Association to coordinate a follow-up meeting. Community members identified two potential projects within the community (i.e. opportunity to develop a Windmill Farm and the redevelopment of old school site land into green space/parkland). Halifax Partnership has convened working group meetings to assist in the identification of an action plan to advance the land opportunities. Meetings included discussion with HRM Planning to review preliminary design work for the proposed parkland. Windmill opportunity is on hold at this time. • Lake Loon Cherry Brook Development Association requested facilitation support to assist with Governance and Strategic Planning to strengthen community and organizational capacity. Partnership facilitated a two-day planning session January 30 & 31. Strategic Plan completed presented to Association February 2015. • East Preston Ratepayers Association has requested a meeting with the Partnership to discuss the a possible review and update of their 2011 Strategic Plan. • Facilitated two sessions with Africville Genealogy Society to review and update the 2005-08 Strategic Plan. • HANSEN (Halifax African Nova Scotian Employment Committee) This Co1mmittee was formulated from the Employment Round Tables of 2009 - mandate is to identify and address employment issues affecting the ANS community. In 2014 the Committee identified the need to gain greater understanding/data around issues of attraction, retention and underemployment with ANS. Partnership assisted with the development of a preliminary survey. A follow-up survey to a larger sample size to be completed in May. • Convened and facilitated Round Table on employment with WADE along with members from the Department of Advance Labour and Education. Outcome: Training needs identified for employment related to major project opportunities. 2nd Roundtable to held Fall 2015. • Facilitated roundtable at the African Nova Scotian Economic Development Conference held November 28th and 29th. Presently working with planning committee for second symposium "Pathways to Sustainability African Nova Scotian Community. Session to be held in October/November 2015 • Co-hosted one-day training session for Worldview Awareness. • Assisted in the coordination of the Black and Immigrant Women in (home-based) Business Networking sessions.

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1.3 Marketing and Promotions	<p>a. Market and promote the Municipality 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.</p>	Brand - Objective 2	<p>Increase the level of business familiarity with GHP (source: CRA Business Confidence Study) >20% increase in web and social media participants >10% increase in investment related requests >10% increase in Halifax business case downloads</p>	<p>TARGETS ACHIEVED The Partnership's Spring 2015 Business Confidence Survey shows that the overall level of business familiarity with the Partnership has increased by 2% since the previous year, with 50% of businesses surveyed reporting they were completely or moderately familiar That percentage has grown steadily in the four years since the survey's inception, from a low of 44% in 2011.</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. Results compared to year-end 2013-14 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% increase in total social media followers; • 28% increase in Twitter followers • 21% increase increase in facebook page likes; • 14% increase in LinkedIn group members • 95,454 total website users (47% increase over last year) • 212 Halifax Business Case Brochures generated at WHYHalifax.ca and 5,299 whyHalifax .pdf downloads (10% increase over last year) • Hosted Building our Future events ("Let's Talk Exports") on May 7, 2014 with 120 attendees • Hosted our 2014 State of the Economy Conference on May 22, 2014 with 300 attendees • Hosted Building our Future - A Bold Halifax on January 12, 2015
	<p>b. Work with HRM's Corporate Communications Team on the development of a brand, brand strategy and implementation plan.</p>	Brand - Objectives 1 & 2	<p>Brand Creative Completed New Brand for HRM is launched GHP lead Business Brand Messaging for Halifax</p>	<p>IN PROGRESS 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. Over 20,000 residents contributed to the engagement process.</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> <p>The launch of the brand included the website www.Halifaxdefined.ca, this website is a showcase for the new brand an outlines how the new brand was chosen and what the new brand means to the community. The city is rolling out the brand in a systematic way. Buses are being re-painted & community signs are being replaced with the new brand. This goes along way to achieve community buy-in. In the near future Greater Halifax Partnership and the Halifax Gateway will be changing their brands to align and support the new Halifax brand. The new brand strategy is also being integrated into all our Investment Attraction activities.</p>
2.1 Professional Economic Analysis, Advisory Services & Project Leadership	<p>a. Through analysis of BRE data, identify, analyse and make recommendations on 3-5 business issues that are determined to be common amongst companies.</p>	Business Climate - Objective 1	<p>>3 specific studies and reports provided to HRM</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED Quarterly results from the Partnership's SmartBusiness Program are shared with Halifax Government Relations and External Affairs Division and the Office of the CAO. Company common issues specific to Municipal services are identified and shared within the report. The Partnership also sits as a member of the SNSMR A2B Advisory Committee focused on improving municipal/provincial regulatory or service improvement.</p>

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	b. Briefings or reports on matters of significance to the municipal economy in response to studies, report and initiatives undertaken by economics-based organizations as requested.		Studies and reports provided to HRM where requests for advice and analysis are responded to and recommendations are provided.	Provided feedback on the Rural Economic Benchmarking Report Provided feedback on food industry data
	c. Provide high level analysis of requests for the Municipality to fund economic development projects, as they arise from time to time, to facilitate informed decision-making on the merits and economic return of public investment		Provide as required.	TARGET ACHIEVED The Spring 2014 Business Confidence Survey was conducted and results were summarized in The Halifax Index 2014. Produced the April, July, October & January Economic Update. March Economic Update attached. Sector Profiles updated quarterly . . . Go to whyhalifax.com Responded to 3 HRM data requests.
	d. Provide project leadership as requested .		Provide as required.	Not required.
2.2 Research & Data	a. Provide general research, analysis and advice to the Municipality on projects and initiatives of an economic nature as requested.	Business Climate - Objective 1	Economic data and research provided to HRM as requested. Conduct an independent review of HRM's taxi rate review, in accordance with Administrative Order number 39. ☐	TARGET ACHIEVED Responded to 3 HRM data requests. Taxi Rate review not require din 2014-15.
	b. Maintain a database of current economic information related to employment, population, gross domestic product, business trends, comparative tax, development costs and similar economic profiles that support marketing the Municipality for investment attraction and business development that is accessible. Facts from these databases will be disseminated through the Partnership's website, social media and presentations.		Prepare and/or present: General research, analysis and advice provided to HRM on request Quarterly updates for the Halifax business case and sector profiles Quarterly economic reports Results from the CRA Business Confidence Study (2 per year)	TARGET ACHIEVED The Spring 2014 Business Confidence Survey was conducted and results were summarized in The Halifax Index 2014. Produced the April, July, October & January Economic Update. March Economic Update attached. Sector Profiles updated quarterly . . . Go to whyhalifax.com Responded to 3 HRM data requests.

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	c. Develop the third annual Halifax Index and program for the annual State of the Economy Event (May 2014) in collaboration with various external partners to track progress on economic, environmental and social objectives and recommended areas for improvement.	Business Climate - Objective 3 Maximize Growth - Objective 1	Present the 2013-14 Halifax Index at the State of the Economy Conference - May 2014 Produce content for the 2014-15 Halifax Index to be presented at Annual State of the Economy Event in Spring 2015	TARGET ACHIEVED The Halifax Index 2014 was completed and presented at the State of the Economy Conference - May 2014 A copy can be found at http://www.halifaxpartnership.com/en/home/economic-data-reports/halifax-index/default.aspx The Halifax Index 2015 will be presented to the community in June 2015.
	d. Work with partners to capitalize on high value, high potential economic growth opportunities and respond to threats facing business.	Maximize Growth - Objective 1	High value, high potential economic growth opportunities identified Threats identified Strategy developed minimize threats Key deliverables and outcomes reported on	TARGET ACHIEVED May 27, 2014 – Dongdu International Group (DDI), a Shanghai-based international real estate, high technology and lifestyle oriented company, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) and Greater Halifax Partnership (the Partnership) formalizing intentions to carry out a multi-phased plan of investment and development in Halifax and other areas of Nova Scotia.
	e. Working with partners, benchmark development fees and charges and timelins against other similar jurisdictions in Canada.	Business Climate - Objective 1	Deliver benchmarking report regarding fees/charges, timelins and processes by the end of October 2014	Completed.
	f. Leverage the BRE 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, including through workshops as recommended in the Auditor General's report on Economic Development through partnerships.	Maximize Growth - Objective 1	> Quarterly BRE Report > Workshop with HRM staff on BRE program	TARGET ACHIEVED The quarterly results from the Partnership's SmartBusiness Program shared with Halifax Government Relations and External Affairs Division and the Office of the CAO The 2014-15 SmartBusiness Annual Report on BRE outcomes, activities, and findings completed. (Report attached). July 23 -- Presented SmartBusiness Program Overview to the HRM's Economic Development Outcome Team.
3.1 Budget and Business Planning	a. Produce an annual business plan and budget. Include in it measures to be achieved by the Partnership in conducting its operations in a manner that aligns to the Municipality's corporate direction and the terms of this agreement.		Business plan and budget are produced.	TARGET ACHIEVED 2015-16 Business Plan approved by the Board of Directors in March 2015. See http://bit.ly/1lkeQbq
			Measurements identified and tracked monthly, reported quarterly.	Completed.

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CORE STRATEGIES & FUNCTIONS	Deliverables	Aligns to Economic Strategy	Performance Indicators	2014-15 Year-End Cumulative Results (Unaudited)
	<p>b. Leverage HRM's operating grant by partnering with other levels of government and the private sector, in an effort to enhance services provided to the Municipality.</p>		<p>Leverage \$2M from the private sector and federal/provincial government (includes project funding). Achieve 90% renewal of private sector investors Engage 6 new investors</p>	<p>TARGET NOT ACHIEVED</p> <p>Leveraged \$1.9M (preliminary) from private sector and federal/provincial government There were 113 investors in total at the end of last fiscal period. Non-renewals for the year : Collins Barrow, Doctors NS, Shell Canada and Rogers which represents an adjusted 96% renewal rate. There have been 15 new investors in the Partnership this fiscal year, a 13% increase. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lockheed Martin • BDO • Cisco • I.H. Mathers • IBM • Lois Lane Communications • Hilton/Silverbirch • Journeyman Films • Right Some Good • Revolve • Scotian Materials • Word Right Career & HR Consulting • Napkin Creative • Value Improvement Consulting • eOlio <p>There are now 124 active investors in the partnership as of March 31.</p>
3.2 Board Oversight	<p>a. Ensure effective board oversight, including risk and financial management and implementation through regular evaluation of activities and financial results. This is achieved through a regular performance evaluation framework and financial and risk management reporting review.</p>		<p>Attain break-even bottom line Hold quarterly Audit and Risk Committee and Board of Directors meetings, including review of quarterly financial reports and risk management framework Annual Board Survey Board and Committee Oversight</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED</p> <p>Bottom-line for 2014-15 tracking on budget - audited results will be available in May. AGM held in June 7 Board Meetings held 6 Audit and Risk Committee meetings held. Audited FS for the year-ended March 31, 2014 approved. 8 monthly internal finance meetings held. Board Survey - December 2014</p>
	<p>b. Achieve and maintain international certification of our economic development efforts.</p>		<p>AEDO certification maintained</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED</p> <p>In Q4 the Partnership was re-certified as an Accredited Economic Development Organization through the International Economic Development Council.</p>
3.3 Reporting Requirements	<p>a. Attend meetings and/or provide reports to Regional Council, the Community Planning and Economic Development Committee and HRM's Senior Management Team (SMT), as required, on the</p>		<p>Meeting engagements as requested (SMT, M40, CAO, Mayor, Council)</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED</p> <p>Meeting with CAO >10 Meeting with Mayor >10 CEO Meetings with Regional Councils >10 CPED - May 10th</p>
			<p>Year-end SLA report to CPED standing committee</p>	<p>TARGET ACHIEVED</p> <p>2013-14 Year End Report to CPED - May 10, 2014</p>

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CORE STRATEGIES & FUNCTIONS	Deliverables	Aligns to Economic Strategy	Performance Indicators	2014-15 Year-End Cumulative Results (Unaudited)
	status of Partnership activities and their alignment with the Municipality's corporate direction.		Year-end SLA report to Regional Council	TARGET ACHIEVED 2013-14 Year End Report to Regional Council - July 22, 2014
	b. Working with municipal staff, prepare and present an annual year-end report for Regional Council, including measurable outcomes resulting from the HRM's and Partnership's efforts to implement the Economic Strategy.		Annual year-end report is written and provided to Regional Council by June 30th	TARGET ACHIEVED 2013-14 Year End Report to CPED - May 10, 2014 2013-14 Year End Report to Regional Council - July 22, 2014 2013-14 Year End Report to CPED - July 22, 2014
4. Economic Strategy Implementation	a. Serve as overall lead in supporting the Economic Strategy Implementation Steering Committee. Track, monitor and report on progress toward achieving the Strategy's goals and objectives, as required. (3-5 Year Economic Strategy Actions attached).		Provide three Economic Strategy and SLA Status Reports to CAO and CPED Provide year-end SLA and Economic Strategy Report to CAO, CPED and Council	TARGET ACHIEVED 2013-14 Year End Report to CPED - July 22, 2014 2013-14 Year End Report to Regional Council - July 22, 2014 2014-15 Q1 & Q2 Update Report to CPED - November 3, 2014 2014-15 Q1 & Q2 Update Report to Council - November 13, 2014 2014-15 Q3 Update Report to CPED - April 16, 2015
			Maintain and update Economic Strategy web portal	TARGET ACHIEVED Maintained at http://bit.ly/1HOTi0Z
	b. GHP will act as the legal entity through which the SUP is administered and will ensure resources are aligned to the values, principles, Regional Centre goals and objectives of the 2011-2016 Strategy.		GHP and HRM will enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (based upon review and approval of HRM) with the SUP on the terms and conditions of HRM's investment in the Strategic Urban Partnership	TARGET NOT ACHIEVED April 28, 2014 - SUP Cogswell Shakeup Report submitted to Executive Standing Committee http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCadmin/documents/CogswellReportAttachment3TheCogswellShakeup.pdf May 13, 2014 - SUP Cogswell Shakeup Report presented to Regional Council June 5, 2014 - SUP Core Team Meeting June 26, 2014 - SUP Meeting Q3 - Members of HRM's core team meet with HRM to discuss future role and next steps Q4 - HRM and GHP awaiting response from SUP recommending ongoing role and priorities

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CORE STRATEGIES & FUNCTIONS	Deliverables	Aligns to Economic Strategy	Performance Indicators	2014-15 Year-End Cumulative Results (Unaudited)
	<p>c. GHP will act as the lead to explore, and take the initial steps to integrate the theory and experience of trusted advisors from CISCO, IBM and the ICanada movement on how best to transition Halifax to a naturally networked and connected smart city and optimize the alignment of economic development initiatives.</p>		<p>Launch of the "True Growth Network" in Halifax at the May 22nd SOEC event.</p>	<p>TARGET NOT ACHIEVED - ONGOING</p> <p>At the May 22nd SOEC event the Halifax Ecosystem was launched. The Halifax Ecosystem has continued to evolve with the support and guidance of Cisco and IBM. This new, collaborative approach to economic development aims to increase engagement from all sectors of our community and get to action and solutions sooner on key economic and social issues. The Halifax Ecosystem is the way we can experiment together and take action on big ideas that will drive attitude change, innovation and prosperity in Halifax and our region. In October Cisco hosted an all-day Ecosystem meeting in Toronto with 8 communities from across Canada. The intent was for each community to share successes and challenges so there would be ongoing collaboration. The event was a good opportunity for like-minded communities to meet each other and then continue to work together on the common goal of economic prosperity using the ecosystem model. Communities that attended were Halifax, Moncton, Saint John, Sault Saint Marie, Windsor, London, Toronto, and Kingston.</p> <p>In December the Attitude working group launched Boldhalifax.ca and the Bold Promise. Boldhalifax.ca is a website designed to showcase all the bold things happening in our city. The Bold Halifax movement has over 14 organization that have signed on as Bold endorsers. The Bold promise is the evolution of the Halifax Pledge that the Halifax Partnership launched last year at our annual State of the Economy event. The Bold Promise currently has over 500 people who have signed the promise.</p>

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 show representative opinions** you would find from public polling. **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. SmartBusiness has undertaken the following activity this year (April to March):

- Retention Visits: 150 (124 SMEs; 50+ HROs*)
- Retentions: 5
- Expansions: 7
- Referrals Generated: 390
- Business Consultations: 147
- Jobs Created & Retained: 541+

*SMEs & HROs stand for *Small to Medium Enterprises* and *Head & Regional Offices* respectively. The HRO numbers include C-level meetings not recorded as Retention Visits; their data is not included in this report. This report represents data across 150 interviews with clients between April 2014 and March 2015. SmartBusiness clients may not be representative of businesses in general.

Executive Summary

- **The Overall Business Climate is improving slightly** – While changes are quite small, there has been an increase in overall opinions of Halifax’s business climate. More than half of businesses believe the business climate has improved (54.3%) and is currently good or excellent (56.3%). Confidence in the future remains very high, but is largely unchanged since last quarter.
- **Public Transportation dominates discussion of municipal services** – Many businesses are commenting on the state of public transportation. Among municipal services, it is the most discussed and important issue (65.0%). There is a common desire to see the system “improved” or “revamped”. Current opinions on the performance of the system are mostly negative (-19.5) and moderately lower than April last year (-11.6).
- **Workforce Availability is a chief concern for business** – Businesses agree that Halifax is doing well at providing quality labour; although fewer companies are satisfied with the availability of that labour. Ratings of performance are high for Workforce Quality (+33.1); they are also exceptionally high for Universities (+61.2) and Community College (+65.3). At the same time, Workforce Availability has been gradually declining, falling from +7.6 to -2.3 since April last year. Businesses are focused on Availability.
- **Economic Development Organizations continue to grow in importance** – Opinions of EDOs, specifically incentive granting agencies, rose again this quarter, reaching an all-time high of +34.5. There is a positive consensus among businesses that they are performing well. Just over half of companies (51.5%) consider EDOs to be a top-3 concern for their business. EDOs are now rated higher in importance than any other business climate factor; this is the first recorded instance of a factor outranking Workforce Availability.

Ratings and Scores

SmartBusiness collects information on 23 business climate factors and 8 municipal services. A dashboard has been compiled for each of these topics, providing at-a-glance data at private sector opinion on the business climate in Halifax.

Ratings of performance reflect an underlying score from -100 to +100, indicating how businesses rate particular issues (positively or negatively) and the strength of those opinions. Arrows indicate how much ratings rose/fell since last year. Companies are also asked to list the top-3 most important issues and top-3 most important services. Attention should be paid to boxes **highlighted in red**; more than 25% of companies consider these issues to be very important to their business.

Example Dash

Name of Business Factor
Rating Change

Issue in Focus – Economic Development Organizations

For the first time on record, SmartBusiness clients have identified an issue more important to them than Workforce Availability. The share of interviewees which reported Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) as a top-3 issue to their company has risen from 24.3% to 51.5% this fiscal year; an unprecedented increase. Companies are specifically concerned with incentive granting organizations such as Economic & Rural Development & Tourism or Nova Scotia Business Inc.

Satisfaction with these organizations is quite high. While the measurement has fluctuated this fiscal year, it is up since last April, rising from +28.0 to +34.5. Just over half of companies consider EDO’s performance to be *Good* and an additional fifth consider their performance to be *Excellent*. There is a clear consensus that these EDOs are positively impacting the economy.

Businesses have their concerns: there is a widespread perception that there are overlapping services within EDOs and a lack of integration. Business owners are often confused about how to navigate government services and which agencies manage the programs they need. The desire to simplify and integrate government-to-business service delivery is not new. Both Donald Savoie’s 2010 report *The Way Ahead for Nova Scotia* and Ray Ivany’s 2014 *Now or Never* report articulated a case for better integration. The Ivany Report puts this succinctly: “The goal clear is to have a ‘no wrong door’ approach...” It goes on to suggest a few practical approaches to the issue.

There has recently been some progress on this front.

Following the recommendations in the Ivany Report, the government has established a Department of Business. According to the Ivany Report: “there is significant value in re-organizing business related programming within a new department with... a crystal clear mandate to support all aspects of business expansion in Nova Scotia.” It remains to be seen how this will impact service delivery, though the new department structure could allow for more seamless connections between agencies and services.

The Partnership will be watching this issue closely and assisting companies through the SmartBusiness Program. It helps companies navigate and connects them to the resources and contacts they need to grow their operations in Halifax. The delivery of business services and the performance of these EDOs are a key concern for business.

Halifax Partnership

The Halifax Partnership is Halifax’s economic development organization. We help keep, grow and get business, talent and investment. We do this through leadership on economic issues, our core programs, our partnerships across all sectors, and by marketing Halifax to the world.

If you have any questions or concerns about this document, its methodology, or how its indices are measured, please contact the Partnership at info@halifaxpartnership.com for further details.

