

# HALIFAX

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

**Item No. 14.2.1**  
**Halifax Regional Council**  
**April 12, 2016**

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

Original Signed

**SUBMITTED BY:**

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

**DATE:** March 29, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Halifax's 2016-21 Economic Strategy

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## ORIGIN

Motion passed by the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee at a meeting on March 24, 2016.

## LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Section 4 (b) of the Committee's Terms of Reference: 'The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee shall oversee the Municipality's Economic Plan, Economic Prosperity Indicators and Immigration Action Plan by overseeing the progress of the Municipality's Economic Strategy and Outcome areas and related initiatives.'

## RECOMMENDATION

The Community Planning and Economic Development recommends Halifax Regional Council approve *Halifax's Economic Growth Plan 2016-21* as the new five year economic strategy for Halifax.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Standing Committee received a staff report and presentation on the 2016-21 Economic Strategy at its March 24, 2016 meeting.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Committee considered the report and endorsed the Plan. The Committee passed a motion recommending Regional Council approve the Plan as the new five year economic strategy for Halifax.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications are set out in the March 11, 2016 staff report included as Attachment 1 to this report.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee is a Committee of Regional Council comprised of six Councillors. The meetings are open to the public and the Committee's agendas, minutes, and reports can be viewed at Halifax.ca.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The Standing Committee did not provide Alternatives.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Staff report dated March 11, 2016

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.php> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210, or Fax 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by: Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant 902.490.6520

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

## Item No.

**Community Planning and Economic  
Development Committee  
March 24, 2016**

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

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed by  

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Maggie MacDonald, Managing Director, Government  
Relations and External Affairs

**DATE:** March 11, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Halifax's 2016-21 Economic Strategy

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### **ORIGIN**

May 21, 2015: MOVED by Deputy Mayor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Fisher that the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee recommend Regional Council authorize staff to develop an updated Economic Strategy in collaboration with the Halifax Partnership in accordance with the approach set out in the April 14, 2015 staff report.

June 2, 2015: MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor McCluskey that Halifax Regional Council authorize staff to develop an updated Economic Strategy in collaboration with the Halifax Partnership in accordance with the approach set out in the April 14, 2015 staff report.

### **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

The Halifax Regional Municipality Charter 2008, c. 39, s. 1. permits the municipality to undertake a variety of economic development activities. In particular, sections 70 and 71 describe a number of authorities specific to Area Improvement and Promotion, and Business and Industrial Development.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council approve the attached document, *Halifax's Economic Growth Plan 2016-21*, as the new five-year economic strategy for Halifax.

## **BACKGROUND**

From a policy perspective, economic development entails governments' and communities' efforts to improve the economic well-being and quality of life in their respective jurisdictions. Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) economic development activities include the: management of six business and industrial parks; regulation of businesses and land development; investment in major infrastructure; establishment of, and support to, Business Improvement Districts; collaboration with other levels of government and agencies on economic development issues; and, provision of financial and in-kind support to regional, community, cultural organizations and special events.

HRM also provides operational support to three organizations to further its economic development objectives: Destination Halifax, which promotes Halifax as a destination for business and leisure travelers; the new Halifax Convention Centre Corporation which will operate the new convention centre; and, the Halifax Partnership (the Partnership) which provides professional economic development expertise and services to HRM.

In March 2011, Regional Council endorsed *AGreaterHalifax*, the municipality's economic strategy for 2011-2016. The current strategy has five goals: build a vibrant and attractive Regional Centre; promote a business climate that drives and sustains growth; create a welcoming community where the world's talent can find great opportunities; create a unique international brand for Halifax; and, capitalize on the city's best opportunities for economic growth.

The 2011-16 strategy accomplished some key objectives. Major projects like the Irving Shipyard upgrades, the Halifax Central Library, BP offshore exploration, and Halifax Convention Centre have been completed or are underway. Building trends in the urban core suggest a longer-term trend toward revitalization and densification.

From 2011 to 2016, Halifax's population grew from 402,000 to 418,000 (0.9% annually), its economy grew from \$17.8 to \$19.0 billion (1.7% annually), and unemployment rate remained virtually flat at approximately 6.3%. Commercial taxable property rose 34% from \$6.1 to \$8.2 billion, while municipal debt was reduced 8.9% from \$275 to \$251 million.

Since its release, municipal staff and representatives from the Halifax Partnership have routinely updated CPED on the strategy's implementation. The 2011-16 economic strategy is in its final year.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Economic Strategy Development Process**

On June 2, 2015, Regional Council authorized staff to develop a renewed five-year economic strategy in collaboration with the Halifax Partnership (the Partnership). The approved approach was to review and renew the 2011-16 economic strategy. Given the extensive consultations that took place during the development of the 2011-16 economic strategy, and subsequent projects and consultations by HRM and others, such as the One Nova Scotia Commission and the Halifax branding exercise, Regional Council directed that consultations for the new economic strategy be more focused.

In September 2015, the consulting firm KPMG was awarded the contract to develop the economic strategy, as well as a strategy to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to the municipality. The economic strategy is being partially funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Municipal Affairs, and the FDI strategy is being financed in part by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development's Invest Canada-Community Initiatives Program.

The economic strategy has been guided by an Economic Strategy Advisory Committee (ESAC) that includes representatives from the private sector, military, universities, the provincial government, HRM

and the community at large. ESAC was tasked to refine the vision and goals, generate new ideas, build consensus and communicate results. ESAC is chaired by Matt Hebb, Dalhousie University's Assistant Vice-President of Government Relations, and supported by a smaller working group of KPMG, the Partnership, HRM staff, and provincial representatives.

To inform ESAC and working group discussions, KPMG undertook a best practices review of economic development strategies from elsewhere, and it assessed how HRM's current economic strategy aligns with related plans and other strategies, including the One Nova Scotia Report, the 2013 Municipal Auditor General's Economic Development Governance Review and the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy. In addition, from late November 2015 to February 2016, KPMG and the Partnership held 24 engagement sessions to gather input from sector stakeholders and communities of interest.

Engagement Sessions Held	
Aerospace and Defence	Finance & Insurance
African Nova Scotian	Halifax Partnership Board
BIDs and Business Associations	Halifax Partnership Investors
Community	HRM Directors
Creative Industries	ICT
Department of Business	NS Department of Business & NSBI
Destination Halifax & Trade Centre Limited	NS Office of Planning & Priorities
Development & Construction	Oceans
Digital Media	Population & Talent
Energy	Transportation & Logistics
Entrepreneurship	University Presidents
Environment	Urban Aboriginal

A number of key messages emerged from the engagement sessions:

- **Make Halifax an easier place to do business** -- while regulations are necessary to protect workplaces, communities and the environment, HRM could do more to streamline regulations and communicate their impacts on business;
- **Be more globally competitive** – Halifax's export competitiveness needs to be rooted in the city's natural advantages and investments in talent, skills training and productivity;
- **Build confidence and change attitudes** -- Halifax's economy is projected to be among the best in the country this year, and attitudes and actions should reflect this optimistic outlook;
- **Be more welcoming and inclusive** – Halifax needs to be more welcoming and inclusive, providing equal opportunities for all residents and businesses to thrive;
- **Attract and retain talent** -- more cooperative action from all sectors and more leadership from the business community is needed to make Halifax an attractive choice for young professionals and newcomers;

- ***Become a better place to live and work*** – enhancing Halifax’s quality of life by cultivating the arts and culture scene in Halifax, improving transportation, and becoming more welcoming to minorities will go a long way in making our city a talent magnet;
- ***Align and collaborate*** -- stakeholders want to see greater alignment and collaboration between organizations and groups involved in economic development; and,
- ***Focus on the best opportunities for growth*** -- stakeholders want a targeted approach to growth that takes advantage of Halifax’s strengths and focuses on the city’s most promising economic prospects.

Engagement feedback, research conducted by KPMG and the Partnership, and further discussions with HRM staff and other economic development stakeholders informed the strategy’s vision, five-year objectives, and the actions that will be undertaken in the first one-to-two years of the new economic strategy.

### **Characteristics of the New Economic Strategy**

#### *A Growth Plan with a 15-Year Quantitative Vision*

Today, the population of Halifax is approximately 418,000. It has an economy valued at \$18.6 billion, a per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$44,833, and a commercial tax base of \$6.9 billion.

Over the past five years, Halifax’s economic performance has been relatively strong for a Canadian city of its size, with real GDP having grown 1.5-2.0% per year. Compared to its five benchmark cities – St. John’s, Quebec City, London, Regina and Victoria – Halifax ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in GDP growth and GDP per capita, and 4<sup>th</sup> in population growth over the same period. From 2011 to 2016, the commercial tax base increased 34%, driven largely by construction in the regional centre.

Halifax’s economic performance, however, cannot be assessed in isolation. It is part of a province that is facing long-term demographic and fiscal challenges. Economic growth in the rest of the province has either stalled or is declining. In the past five years, excluding Halifax, provincial GDP has fallen by \$35 million and the population has declined by 19,800, most of it working-age. By 2036, Nova Scotia is forecasted to have 100,000 fewer working-age people (a 20% decline) and 60,000 more people over the age of 65, even with Halifax’s current growth. This translates into a smaller labour pool to provide the taxes needed to serve an aging population. This will put greater pressure on the province’s capital city. Halifax’s economy will have to grow just to maintain residents’ current standard of living.

A long-term quantitative vision for Halifax is, therefore, being proposed – to grow Halifax’s population to 550,000 and to grow the city’s GDP to \$30 billion by 2031. The economic strategy (included as Attachment 1) is titled, *Halifax’s Economic Growth Plan 2016-21*, to reflect this growth agenda.

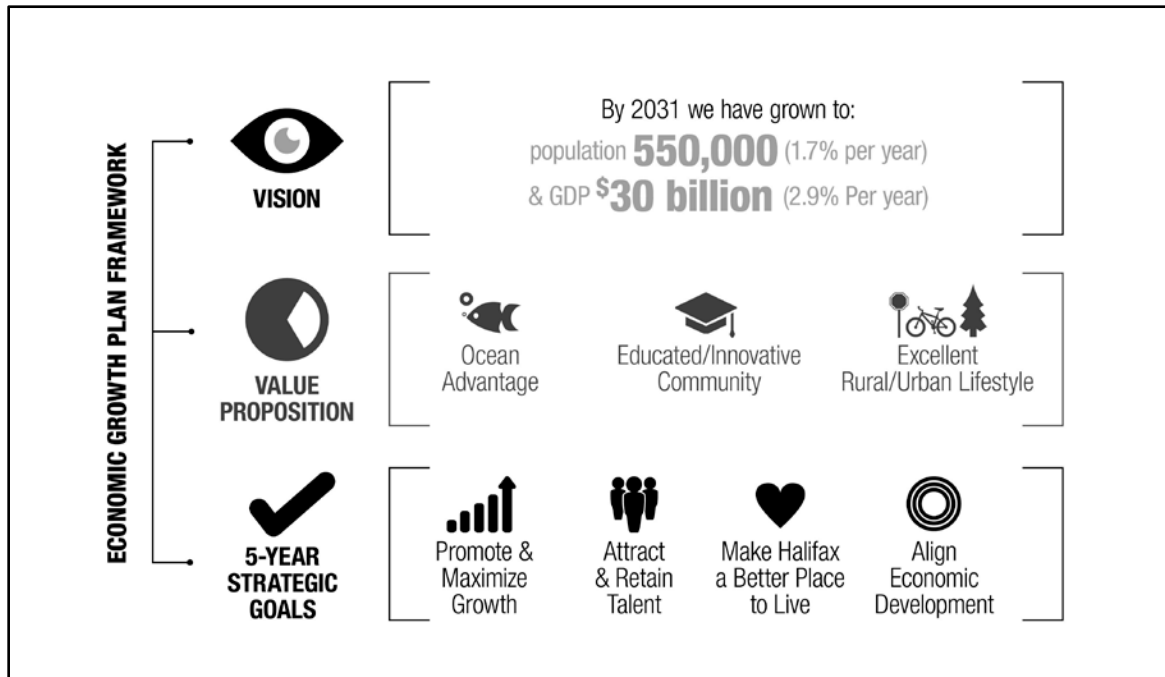
#### *An Emphasis on Halifax’s Value Proposition*

Halifax’s value proposition – that is, its business case for attracting and keeping investment and people here – features prominently in the new economic strategy. It highlights Halifax’s:

- **Ocean Advantage** – the strength of its marine-based sectors, including shipbuilding, transportation and logistics, ocean observation, fisheries and aquaculture, energy and coastal tourism;
- **Educated/Innovative Community** – the creativity of its skilled workforce, six universities, three community colleges and several research institutes; and,

- **Excellent urban/rural lifestyle** – the business, cultural and recreational amenities and opportunities the city’s 200 rural, urban and suburban communities offer.

This value proposition, and the guiding principles – collaborative, global, welcoming, inclusive and positive -- were also top of mind in developing the strategy.



*Five-Year Strategic Goals with Supporting Objectives and Actions*

To achieve the strategy’s fifteen-year vision of a Halifax the size of 550,000 people with a \$30 billion economy, the strategy has four five-year strategic goals:

1. **Promote and Maximize Growth** -- improving regulatory and service efficiency, making it easier to start and grow a business, helping companies compete both locally and abroad, supporting investment in innovation, and finding the best way to leverage Halifax’s competitive advantages and growth opportunities. The target is to grow the city’s GDP to \$22.5 billion by 2021.
2. **Attract and Retain Talent** -- focusing on talent attraction and retention; bridging the gap between industry, education and talent; and, removing systemic barriers to employment. The target is to grow Halifax’s labour force to 271,000 by 2021.
3. **Make Halifax a better place to live and work** -- improving cultural assets, mobility, inclusiveness, and affordability while also ensuring that economic development stakeholders market a strong and clear message about Halifax’s quality of life. The target is to grow Halifax’s population to 470,000 by 2021.
4. **Align economic development** -- ensures that the city and province’s economic development organizations, policies, and programs are in alignment and pushing in the same direction toward Halifax’s shared economic goals for Halifax and Nova Scotia.

Each goal is supported by a number of five-year objectives, as outlined on the following page. These objectives, in turn, are supported by a number of actions that HRM and/or the Partnership will lead in the first two years of the strategy (please see Attachment 2). Whereas the five-year objectives will remain the same throughout the course of the 2016-21 economic strategy, the actions will be reviewed every 18 months to two years.

**Five-Year Strategic Goals & Supporting Objectives**

<b>Promote &amp; Maximize Growth</b>	<b>Grow Halifax's Labour Force</b>	<b>Make Halifax a Better Place to Live &amp; Work</b>	<b>Align Economic Development</b>
<i>Grow Halifax's GDP to \$22.5 billion by 2021.</i>	<i>Grow Halifax's labour force to 271,000 by 2021.</i>	<i>Grow Halifax's population to 470,000 by 2021.</i>	<i>Increase alignment and collaboration.</i>
1. Make Halifax an easier place to do business.	6. Retain youth, international students, and immigrants in Halifax.	10. Ensure access to arts, culture, recreation, and natural assets in Halifax.	16. Increase awareness of the role Halifax plays in Nova Scotia's and Canada's economic development.
2. Work nationally and internationally to attract investment and increase trade.	7. Attract newcomers and expatriates to Halifax.	11. Increase Halifax's environmental sustainability and resiliency.	17. Improve coordination of economic development activities.
3. Improve the conditions for innovation and entrepreneurialism.	8. Promote private sector involvement in co-op and experiential learning.	12. Make Halifax more children/ family-friendly.	18. Monitor the Economic Strategy's progress and adapt actions as required.
4. Collaborate around major projects to maximize their impact on the economy.	9. Increase workforce attachment and combat systemic barriers.	12. Make Halifax a more affordable place to live.	
5. Shape growth to promote clustering of people and business in urban and rural areas.		13. Improve mobility so that people can live and work more effectively.	
		14. Foster cultural competence and social inclusion.	
		15. Showcase Halifax to encourage people to visit, live, and work here.	



### **Next Steps**

A launch plan for the economic strategy is being developed and will be implemented once the economic strategy is approved by Regional Council.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Funding for the renewed economic strategy was approved by Regional Council through the 2015/16 operating budget.

Actions as described in the strategy can be implemented within current budgets. Actions that lead to proposed activities that require unanticipated budget allocations will be brought forward to Regional Council for approval.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no environmental implications from this report.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

**ATTACHMENT 1:**      *Halifax's Economic Growth Plan 2016-21*

**ATTACHMENT 2:**      *Halifax's Economic Growth Plan -- Year 1-2 Actions*

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/index.php> (select the appropriate Community Council and meeting date) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at (Tel) 902.490.4210 or (Fax) 902.490.4208.

Report Prepared by:      Jake Whalen, Senior Advisor, Economic Policy & Development, 902-490-2349

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# **ATTACHMENT 1**

*Halifax's Economic Growth Plan 2016-21*



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## Acknowledgements

### Economic Strategy Advisory Committee (ESAC)

**MATT HEBB**, (ESAC Chair), Associate VP, Government Relations, Dalhousie University

**ERIKA BEATTY**, Producer, Project Manager and Consultant

**BOB BJERKE**, Chief Planner and Director of Planning and Development, Halifax Regional Municipality

**PAT BRADSHAW**, Dean, Sobey School of Business, St Mary's University

**JENNIFER CHURCH**, Executive Director, Office of Planning and Priorities, Province of Nova Scotia

**CHUCK HARTLEN**, Executive VP Customer Experience, Nova Scotia Power Inc.

**APRIL HOWE**, Partner, Knightsbridge Robertson Surette

**STANLEY JULIEN**, Regional VP, Commercial Banking Atlantic, BMO Financial Group

**TRACY KITCH**, President and CEO, IWK Health Centre

**COLIN MACLEAN**, President and CEO, Waterfront Development Corporation Limited

**RHONDA MARKS**, Musquodoboit Harbour and Area Chamber of Commerce

**JOHN NEWTON**, Rear-Admiral, Maritime Forces Atlantic

**ANITA PERRY**, VP Government and Public Affairs, BP Canada Energy

**JOE RAMIA**, President and CEO, Rank Inc.

**GORDON STEVENS**, President, Uncommon Group Ltd.

**OZGE YELOGLU**, Co-founder, TopLog Inc.

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## Funding Partners



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# HALIFAX

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## MESSAGES

Messages will be included in the published document

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

*Halifax needs to grow. We all know this.* We also know that a prosperous future won't simply be handed to us. Sustained growth is hard work and our achieving it will be hard-won. We must be driven to succeed, not quietly or passively, but with energy and with intensity. We must work together, with shared goals and fresh thinking. Halifax's Economic Growth Plan will help us do just that by laying out a plan of action that will see people, business and government working together to achieve measurable results.

### THIS IS WHERE WE'VE COME FROM

*The world has changed since our last economic plan was adopted in 2011.* The global economy has more than exceeded its 2008 strength and the Canadian financial system is on solid footing. The American economy is posting strong growth, but the threat of recession in Russia, a slowing Chinese economy and global instability are concerning. Oil prices are a third of what they were in 2015, and have dragged down the value of the Canadian dollar.

*Halifax has changed over those five years as well.* The city has seen steady and strengthening economic performance despite our aging population and shrinking provincial labour force. We've done relatively well for a Canadian city of our size, with real GDP having grown 1.5-2.0% per year. This year the Conference Board of Canada projects that Halifax will have the 2<sup>nd</sup> fastest growth in Canada. Although economic growth has been slower than the national average, it has picked up over the past few years, boosted by major projects and construction activity. From 2011 to 2016, the commercial tax base increased 34%, driven largely by construction in the regional centre.

Today, the population of Halifax is close to 418,000. It has an economy valued at \$19 billion, a per capita GDP of \$45,481 and a commercial tax base of \$8.2 billion. These are all important measures. By growing our economy, more opportunities are created for people to make a living in our city. GDP per capita reflects our productivity, and as it grows so too does our standard of living.

*The 2011-16 strategy accomplished some key objectives.* Higher density has been achieved in the downtown, and the city has rallied behind the building of the new library and the Nova Centre. The first sheet of steel was cut back in the fall of 2015 for the national shipbuilding project. This project will have a significant and long-term economic benefit for Halifax and the rest of Nova Scotia and is a true testament to how stakeholders can come together to capitalize on economic opportunities. The 100 Wild Islands project on Halifax's Eastern Shore is close to reaching its \$7 million fundraising goal, which will protect over 100 wild islands valued at well over \$14 million.

### THIS IS WHERE WE ARE

In June 2015, when Halifax Regional Council authorized the Halifax Partnership to renew and refresh the city's 2011-16 economic strategy, it was a clear indication that we were to build on the previous strategy.



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*With Halifax's Economic Growth Plan, we're not starting from scratch.* Alignment and collaboration were critical factors in progress made over the previous five years, and will continue to be part of the city's success going forward. We consulted with various stakeholders and benefited from having a number of foundational documents and economic growth efforts to build upon.

In developing this plan, we reviewed municipal, provincial, federal and private sector priorities and strategies focused on growing our city. Foundational documents include:

- *Now or Never* – The Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy report
- *We Choose Now* – ONE Nova Scotia Coalition Collaborative action plan
- Private sector growth plan – Department of Business
- Business plan – Nova Scotia Business Inc.
- Regional plan – Halifax Regional Municipality
- Halifax brand strategy – Halifax Regional Municipality
- 2013-18 strategic plan – Halifax Chamber of Commerce
- Provincial mandates
- Federal mandates
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- *The Halifax Index* – Halifax Partnership

Our analysis reached two conclusions:

- (1) There are shared goals and commonalities amongst various plans
- (2) There is a need for greater alignment between various groups and plans

The Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy recognized the important role Halifax plays in growing the provincial economy. Both the *Now or Never* and the *We Choose Now* reports stress that no single program, organization or institution can achieve the level of growth required to put the province on the path to greater prosperity. *Now or Never* highlights what it calls a “profound need” to come together around a shared vision for change in the province while *We Choose Now* underlines the importance of collaboration. “Nova Scotians,” it says, “are facing challenges that require unprecedented levels of private sector, public sector, and community collaboration.” Alignment and collaboration among all levels of government and various economic development stakeholders is so essential to success, it is a standalone goal in this economic plan. (See Appendix 1 for an overview of Economic Players and Stakeholders.)

Halifax looks and feels different than it did five years ago. We've seen success. Now it's time to build on it. We have to focus on our strengths. We need to think globally. We must act together with conviction and vision. For a plan to succeed, it must be clear, actionable and measurable. It must be built on the foundation of past strategies and past successes. It must reflect the plans of our partners as well as feedback from individuals, businesses, government, post-secondary, various geographic areas and communities of interest.

This is that plan.

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## THIS IS WHERE WE ARE GOING

- **Clear vision**  
By 2031, we want to grow our population to 550,000 and our GDP to \$30 billion. It's a tall order. But one we can achieve, together.
- **Clear focus**  
We must focus on what we do best. We will leverage our ocean advantage, build on our educated and innovative community, and showcase the best urban/rural lifestyle in Canada.
- **Clear alignment**  
There's a piece of this plan that each of us can lead. While business, government, and industry have all played a role in its development, it's ours to own.

*Halifax needs to grow to be the vibrant, prosperous, capital city we all envision.* That is why we set a long-term vision to grow Halifax's population to 550,000 and GDP to \$30 billion by 2031. This is a growth agenda that would nearly double our current population growth rate to 1.7%.

We will need to attract more immigrants and hold on to more of the 2,000 who arrive here each year. It means finding a place in the workforce for more of the 5,800 international students that study here annually. And it means retaining the 1,300 young professionals that leave the province each year in search of opportunities to build their career.

*Economic development is grounded on leveraging and building upon existing strengths and assets.* The ocean drives our economy and provides competitive advantages in key sectors like ocean technology, defence and advanced manufacturing, and transportation and logistics. Our post-secondary sector provides a steady stream of skilled and educated graduates, attracts young people from around the world, and supports numerous knowledge-based industries. And our enviable combination of urban amenities and rural and natural beauty offers an excellent quality of life for current and prospective residents and businesses.

This plan identifies four five-year strategic goals, each with measurable objectives, which are critical to growing our population and economy.

- Promote and Maximize Growth focuses on making it easier to do business in Halifax and capitalizing on our best economic opportunities.
- Attract and Retain Talent is aimed at holding on to immigrants, international students and recent graduates and making the best use of our available workforce.
- Make Halifax a Better Place to Live and Work hones in on improving and showcasing our quality of life, both for its own sake and to attract residents, workers, and business to the city.
- Align Economic Development ensures that the city and province's economic development organizations, policies, and programs are in alignment and pushing in the same direction toward our shared economic goals for Halifax and Nova Scotia.

**Collaboration will be critical.**

Halifax’s Economic Growth Plan will inform and shape municipal decision-making and activity over the next five years. It will guide the activities of the Halifax Partnership and other economic development agencies, and it will influence and align stakeholders to support Halifax’s economic growth. The success of this plan will depend on collaboration among individuals, businesses and agencies.

- The Halifax Partnership will lead the economic growth plan implementation and be the coordinating body responsible for tracking and monitoring progress against goals and objectives. The Partnership’s Board of Directors will provide oversight and strategic guidance on the ongoing implementation of the plan.
- The Mayor and members of Halifax Regional Council and the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee will provide oversight and ensure alignment to the municipality's programs and economic priorities.
- Ongoing engagement from provincial and federal partners, the private, post-secondary, arts and culture, and not-for-profit sectors, and communities at risk will also be critical to successfully implementing the plan.

Halifax is a great place to live and work, and we all want to do everything we can to help it prosper. This is where we start. Get ready to grow.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

These principles reflect our shared values. They were reinforced during the engagement process and guided the development of the economic growth plan. They will continue to guide us in implementing the plan.

- **COLLABORATIVE:** We work together on shared plans and a common agenda to maximize impact and efficiency.
- **GLOBAL:** We look globally for new investment, talent and growth opportunities.
- **WELCOMING:** We welcome new people and businesses into our communities and support them in growing and succeeding.
- **INCLUSIVE:** We welcome diversity and work to make sure everyone has the opportunity to be engaged, contribute and succeed.
- **POSITIVE:** We foster a can-do attitude, take risks and celebrate our success.

# ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN FRAMEWORK

## 5-YEAR STRATEGIC GOALS & OBJECTIVES



### Promote & Maximize Growth

Grow Halifax's GDP to **\$22.5 billion** by 2021

- Make Halifax an easier place to do business
- Work nationally and internationally to attract investment and increase trade
- Improve the conditions for innovation and entrepreneurialism
- Collaborate around major projects to maximize their impact on the economy
- Promote clustering of people and business in urban and rural areas



### Attract & Retain Talent

Grow Halifax's labour force to **271,000** by 2021

- Create opportunities for youth, including international students, to put down roots in Halifax
- Attract immigrants and expatriates to Halifax
- Promote private sector involvement in co-op and experiential learning
- Increase workforce attachment and combat systemic barriers



### Make Halifax a Better Place to Live and Work

Grow Halifax's population to **470,000** by 2021

- Ensure access to arts, culture, recreation, and natural assets in Halifax
- Increase Halifax's environmental sustainability and resiliency
- Make Halifax Canada's most family/children-friendly city
- Make Halifax a more affordable place to live
- Improve mobility so that people can live and work more effectively
- Foster cultural proficiency and social inclusion
- Showcase Halifax to encourage people to visit, live, and work here



### Align Economic Development

Increase Alignment and Collaboration

- Increase awareness of the role Halifax plays in Nova Scotia's and Canada's economic development
- Improve coordination of economic development activities
- Monitor the Economic Plan's progress and adapt actions as required

## ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN FRAMEWORK



VISION



VALUE PROPOSITION



5-YEAR STRATEGIC GOALS

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## GLOBAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

### Global Context

Halifax is competing with the world for business, talent and investment. The city's vibrant post-secondary sector, its steady stream of graduates, its ocean research and technology sector, and its affordable cost of doing business are important competitive advantages.

#### THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF CITIES

More than ever before, urban centres are the main drivers of population and economic growth. Strong urban growth benefits cities, their surrounding regions and, ultimately, entire countries. On the other hand, regions that don't have vibrant and growing cities lose access to the markets, investments, talent, and resources they need to grow and prosper. People, followed by service industries, are attracted to the conveniences and standard of living modern cities offer. Those cities foster cultures of innovation and provide economic efficiencies – two significant competitive advantages. Nova Scotia's population is becoming more urban, but not as fast as the rest of the developed world.

#### GLOBAL MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Global economic growth is expected to be sluggish over the next few years, however there are still opportunities in key export markets. The U.S. economy, which accounts for 70% of Nova Scotia's exports, is getting stronger. Growth in the province's second largest export market, the EU, is expected to remain lacklustre. But the likely ratification of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) in 2016 will provide new opportunities for exporters and the Halifax Gateway.

#### AN AGING POPULATION

The world's workforce is getting older which affects labour availability, public health and social costs, and government revenues. Nova Scotia's population is aging at a faster rate than almost any other Canadian province.

#### MOBILE TALENT

Intense competition for skilled workers and increasingly mobile populations are hallmarks of modern cities around the world. Halifax must attract and retain as many young, skilled people as possible to stay competitive. If young people leave Halifax to establish their careers somewhere else, we lose the economic benefits - including spending power and tax revenues - associated with their prime earning years. We also lose access to the network of professional connections that they will develop over the years, and an unknown number of "next big things" as young entrepreneurs build their start-ups in other places.

#### SUSTAINABILITY

Economic growth can - and must - happen without unacceptable costs to our environment. Growth needs to be sustainable to positively affect our standard of living. Well-designed urban density, efficient and well-used public transit, and energy efficient infrastructure provide competitive advantages, reduce

environmental impacts and improve public fiscal sustainability. As the federal and provincial governments work to reduce the impacts of climate change and become more environmentally sustainable, we will need to align Halifax’s overall growth objectives with environmental policy measures such as carbon pricing, revised building codes, and heightened emphasis on public transit.

#### ACCELERATING TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

Technology, entrepreneurship and disruptive innovations such as, Uber and Airbnb, are changing the way we do business and consume goods and services. Governments are challenged to adapt regulatory regimes to changing market realities.

## Local Context

Since Halifax’s 2011-16 economic strategy was adopted, the city has seen steady and strengthening economic performance despite an aging population and shrinking provincial labour force. Although economic growth has been slower than the national average, it has picked up over the past few years, boosted by major projects and construction activity, especially downtown. From 2011-16, the commercial tax base increased 34% from \$6.1 billion to \$8.2 billion, driven largely by construction in the regional centre.

The Conference Board of Canada reported that among the country’s 28 biggest cities, Halifax experienced the fourth fastest economic growth in 2015, and will see the second fastest economic growth in 2016 – all as we continue to build on our strengths and create a more supportive business environment.

### ECONOMIC INDICATORS (2015) AND AVERAGE ANNUAL PERCENT CHANGE (2011-15)

	HALIFAX	NOVA SCOTIA	REST OF NS
Population	417,847	943,002	525,155
Avg. annual percent change	0.9	0.0	-0.8
Real GDP (2007 \$ millions)	19,004*	33,902*	14,898*
Avg. annual percent change	1.7	0.8	-0.3
Real GDP per capita (2007 \$)	45,481*	35,951*	28,369*
Avg. annual percent change	0.7	0.8	0.5
Employment	224,100	448,100	224,000
Avg. annual percent change	0.6	-0.3	-1.1
Unemployment Rate (%)	6.3	8.6	10.8

Commercial Taxable Property (\$ millions)**	8,170	12,635	4,465
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Source: Statistics Canada, The Conference Board of Canada, Halifax Regional Municipality

\*The latest year (2015) of GDP data is based on Conference Board forecasts.

\*\*Commercial Taxable Property data are for 2016.

The Conference Board of Canada rates Halifax very highly for its level of economic diversity. The city has strengths in aerospace, naval and defence/advanced manufacturing, financial services, ocean technology, information and communication technology (ICT), and transportation and logistics. There is more focus on the service sector in Halifax than the average Canadian city. This is consistent with its role as a services hub for the Atlantic region.

### HALIFAX'S RELATIONSHIP TO NOVA SCOTIA

The economies of Halifax and Nova Scotia feed one another. Halifax is the economic engine for the province, accounting for half the workforce and more than half of all economic activity and tax revenue. It provides business, trade and employment opportunities for Nova Scotians. Likewise, the rest of the province is crucial to Halifax's success, contributing disproportionately to the province's merchandise exports – including tires, seafood, forestry and mineral products – that often travel through the city's transportation network and ensure a crucial injection of income into both economies.

Urban-rural linkages are also key to Halifax's value proposition. The city's ocean sector, from value-added seafood manufacturing to ocean nutraceuticals, is intimately connected to ocean-related activity throughout the province. Post-secondary education and research networks spread well beyond the borders of the city to other post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia, as well as to major projects like the Fundy Ocean Research Center for Energy, Canada's leading research centre for in-stream tidal energy. The natural beauty and cultural influences of rural communities all over the province also contribute directly to the high quality of life enjoyed by urban residents and tourists.

### HALIFAX AS A SHARE OF NOVA SCOTIA, SELECT INDICATORS, 2014



Source: Statistics Canada, The Conference Board of Canada, Atlantic Provinces Economic Council, Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission

Considered in this context, it is all the more important that Halifax achieves strong economic and population growth. Halifax is part of a province that is facing long-term demographic and fiscal challenges. Economic growth in the rest of the province has either stalled or is declining. Recent trends

outside of Halifax are startling. In the past five years, excluding Halifax, provincial GDP has fallen by \$35 million. Population declined by 19,800, most of it working-age.

The future is not looking much better. By 2036, the province is forecasted to have 100,000 fewer working-age people (a 20% decline) and 60,000 more people over the age of 65, even with Halifax’s current growth. This translates into a smaller labour pool to provide the taxes needed to serve an aging population.

This will put greater pressure on the province’s capital city. As Nova Scotia’s workforce tightens and rural regions are threatened by the loss of traditional industries, Halifax will need to support an increasing share of the province’s fiscal burden. In order to continue enjoying today’s quality of life, Halifax needs to be in a position to support the province for much more than its share. This means that Halifax must grow.

### THE ROLE OF MAJOR PROJECTS

Major project activity has been a main driver of economic growth over the past several years and the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council’s (APEC) Major Project Inventory predicts that spending will increase by as much as 20% in 2016 – an important driver of the strong growth projected for Halifax this year.

While major project activity is expected to remain strong into the foreseeable future, longer-term growth of that magnitude cannot be guaranteed. APEC’s baseline scenario for major project spending (spending on projects that are already underway or near approval) for 2017 predicts a reduced, though still historically high, level of spending. When taking the alternative scenario into account (which also includes projects that are still under development or review), this increases to only modest growth.

The following chart provides a rough sense of the five-year timeline for larger (greater than \$200 million) major projects as catalogued in APEC’s 2014 Major Project Inventory. The largest projects – those estimated at over \$500 million – are identified with bold font.

START DATE	END DATE	
<b>ALREADY UNDERWAY</b>	COMPLETE BY 2021	CONTINUES BEYOND 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>BP Offshore Exploration</b></li> <li>• <b>Shell Offshore Exploration</b></li> <li>• <b>Maritime Link Power Transmission Line</b></li> <li>• <b>Frigate Modernization and Life Extension Contract</b></li> <li>• <b>HRM Five-Year Capital Budget</b></li> <li>• <b>Halifax Convention Centre Development</b></li> <li>• Russell Lake West Development</li> <li>• Halifax International Airport Capital Plan</li> <li>• Irving Shipyard Upgrades</li> <li>• Bedford Common Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Halifax Shipyard Contract</b></li> <li>• <b>The Parks of West Bedford Subdivision</b></li> <li>• <b>King’s Wharf Waterfront Development</b></li> <li>• <b>Forest Lakes Country Club</b></li> <li>• <b>The Ravines of Bedford South</b></li> <li>• <b>Motherhouse Property Development</b></li> <li>• <b>Seton Ridge Development</b></li> <li>• Harbour Isle Project</li> <li>• Governor’s Brook Subdivision</li> <li>• Rockingham South Subdivision</li> <li>• Bayers Lake Business Park</li> </ul>

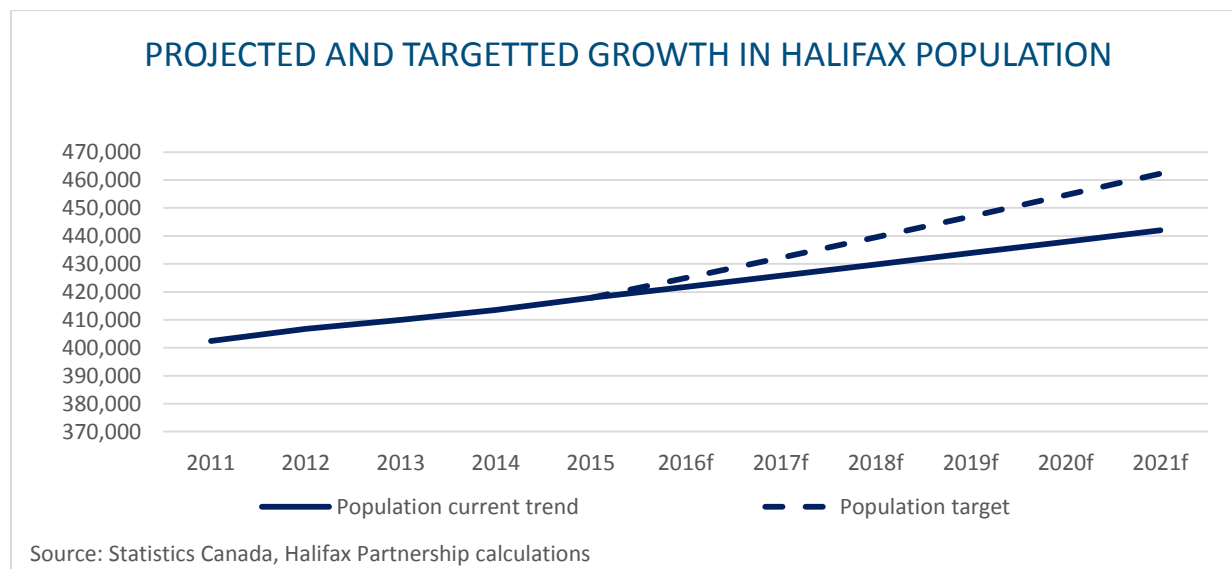


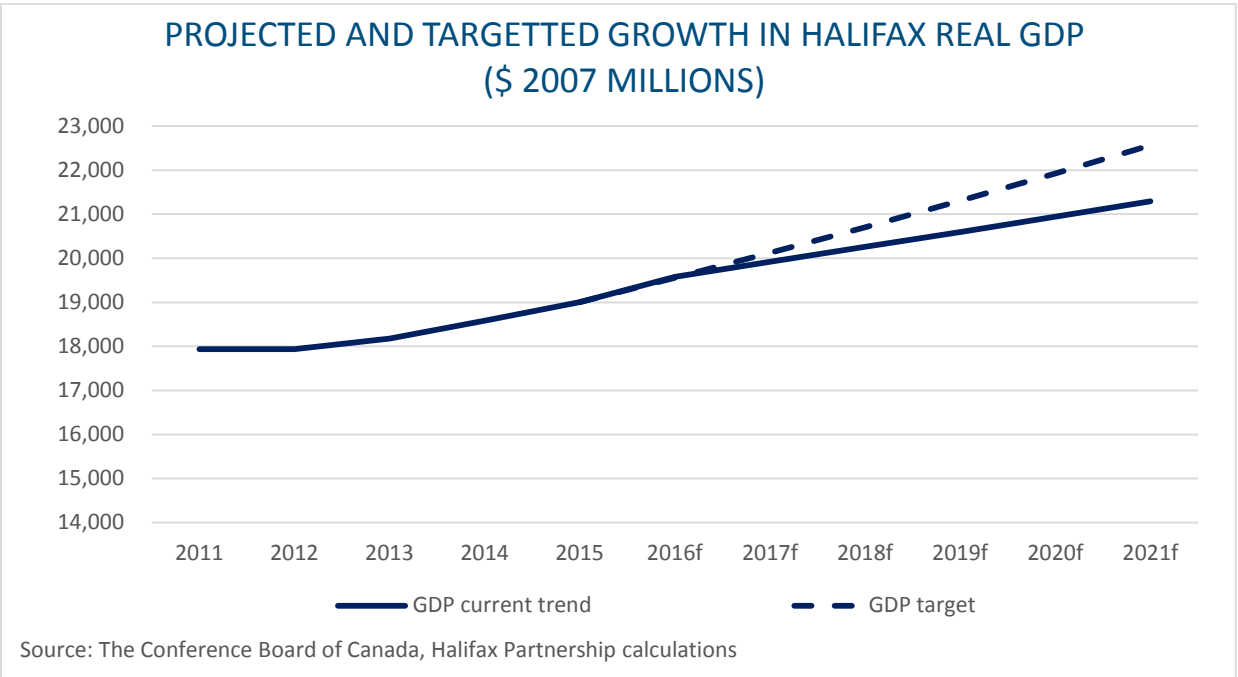
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MacDonald Bridge Renovation</li> <li>• Dalhousie University Capital Projects</li> <li>• Port of Halifax Spending</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion</li> <li>• Former Halifax West High School Site</li> <li>• Indigo Shores Subdivision</li> <li>• Eon Square</li> </ul>
<b>TO START BEFORE 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halifax and Dartmouth Hospital Upgrades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cogswell Interchange Redevelopment</b></li> </ul>

Note: We do not have the necessary data to depict specific project spending across individual years. Some of the projects identified below may already have completed the bulk of their investments; others with timelines that stretch beyond 2021 actually may have minimal expenditures until 2022 and beyond. Start and/or end dates may also have changed since the APEC report was published. Also, many projects still require further steps in terms of approval, development, and review, or are simply at the proposal stage.

Just as new major projects have been a driver of growth in recent years, any downturn in major project investment will be a drag on overall growth. In a best-case scenario, many alternative scenario projects, such as the redevelopment of the Cogswell Interchange, will happen along with new ones not yet identified (perhaps arising from new federal infrastructure money). But basing plans on best case predictions and crossed fingers generally leads to complacency first and disappointment later.

As the following graphs show, in only five short years, the gap between a status quo future and one in which our economic vision for Halifax is realized is equivalent to over 20,000 residents and almost \$1.3 billion in annual economic activity.





Progress on the plan’s goals will help to close this gap. Leveraging our assets, attracting and retaining more graduates and immigrants, fostering a climate of innovation and capitalizing on our best growth opportunities will help pick up the slack from any downturn in major project activity. By making Halifax an increasingly attractive location for investment, our odds of landing more major projects in the future will go up.

**WORKFORCE CHALLENGES**

The impact of the aging workforce can be seen in the slow but steady decline of the city’s labour force, a trend that is forecast to continue over the next decade. Retention of immigrants, international students, and recent post-secondary graduates is both a challenge and an opportunity. Halifax’s labour productivity lags the national average, at least in part because businesses across the province underinvest in R&D and employee training relative to their counterparts in other provinces. Though not unique to Halifax, these problems make it more difficult for business to grow and create a heavier tax burden for the existing workforce.

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: WHAT WE HEARD

An important component of the economic strategy renewal process was hearing from key stakeholders who are passionate about our city. We held 24 engagement sessions with organizations and individuals from private, public, post-secondary, and community sectors. This gave us a broader understanding of progress made on the 2011 strategy and helped us identify factors currently constricting economic and population growth in Halifax. We also reviewed results from extensive stakeholder engagement undertaken for the Halifax branding strategy and the One Nova Scotia Commission.

We asked groups to identify key opportunities and challenges they will face over the next five years and highlight specific concerns and suggested solutions.

### Key Messages

Overall we heard consistent feedback on common issues, economic opportunities and action areas - some are existing, while others are new. Specific issues were also identified by sector.

#### MAKE HALIFAX AN EASIER PLACE TO DO BUSINESS

Halifax needs to become more business friendly. The business community argues there is too much red tape. Licensing, permit applications and approval processes are seen to be cumbersome and inefficient. There is also a perceived lack of transparency, accountability and willingness to change among government departments and agencies. While regulations are necessary to protect our workplaces, our communities, and our environment, we need to do a better job streamlining regulations and communicating with businesses about regulations and their potential impact.

#### BE MORE GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE

To maximize export growth, Halifax businesses need to be more globally competitive. The recent decline in the international value of the Canadian dollar will boost exporters in the short run. However, in the long run, export competitiveness needs to be rooted in the city's natural advantages and investments in talent, skills training and productivity.

#### BUILD CONFIDENCE AND CHANGE ATTITUDES

Residents and business owners are not confident they can bring about positive change in Halifax. Economic growth has been on an upward climb over the past two years, yet this has not translated into increased confidence in the economy or our city's growth prospects. Halifax's economy is projected to be among the best in the country this year, and attitudes and actions should reflect this optimistic outlook. We need to celebrate our success and foster a can-do attitude.

#### BE MORE WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE

Halifax has a reputation for being friendly, but not that welcoming or supportive of new people, businesses or traditionally marginalized groups. We need to be more welcoming and inclusive, providing equal opportunities for all residents and businesses to thrive.

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## **ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT**

Given the concentration of universities and colleges in Halifax and its diverse economy, our city has an opportunity to become the place where young people choose to live and work. Youth retention is our best opportunity to grow the population and turn the province's finances around. On average, 1,300 people on net between the ages of 20 and 29 leave Nova Scotia each year for other provinces, and that doesn't include international students who come to Nova Scotia to study and then leave the country. Attracting and helping immigrants settle into and succeed in our city will also boost our population. We need cooperative action from all sectors and more leadership from the business community to make Halifax an attractive choice for young professionals and newcomers.

## **BECOME A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK**

Quality of life is a big part of talent attraction and retention. Finding and keeping people with the right skill sets is a challenge for many industries. Halifax has a real opportunity to retain the 35,000 students who study at our universities and colleges each year, but there were contrasting views on the city's appeal for young people. Some believe that the major challenge to youth retention is a lack of post-graduation employment, while others pointed to a lack of cultural and creative activities. Enhancing Halifax's quality of life by cultivating the arts and culture scene in Halifax, improving transportation, being more environmentally sustainable, and becoming more welcoming to minorities will go a long way in making our city a talent magnet.

## **ALIGN AND COLLABORATE**

There was consensus that no single organization or sector can achieve economic prosperity alone. Confusion remains over the roles of the Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax Partnership and the province in growing Halifax's economy. Stakeholders want to see greater alignment and collaboration between organizations and groups involved in economic development.

## **FOCUS ON THE BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH**

Stakeholders want a targeted approach to growth that takes advantage of our strengths and focuses on Halifax's most promising economic prospects. Capitalizing on major projects and opportunities around our burgeoning ocean economy and the soon-to-be built Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship (COVE), the national shipbuilding contract, and offshore oil and gas exploration will require alignment, collaboration and investment from all sectors. So will driving innovation and entrepreneurialism.

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## OUR VISION

### **Halifax will grow to 550,000 people by 2031**

APPROXIMATELY 1.7% GROWTH PER YEAR

### **Halifax will grow to \$30 billion in real GDP by 2031**

APPROXIMATELY 2.9% GROWTH PER YEAR

We have set our sights on long-term economic growth and developed a 15-year vision to help get us there. The vision is supported by a five-year growth plan designed to move us closer to success.

#### **GROWTH TARGETS**

Population and GDP growth are key measures that indicate the strength of our economy and the attractiveness of our city as a place to live, work and do business.

A diverse and growing population supports business and enables the development of new and improved services and infrastructure. It enriches our cultural identity and quality of life. It enhances our appeal.

Equally important is GDP growth, which measures our overall material wealth and prosperity. Growing our economy will create new opportunities for our citizens, improve our standard of living, and make Halifax a top choice for talent, business and investment from around the world.

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## HALIFAX'S VALUE PROPOSITION

Good economic development is grounded on leveraging and building upon a location's existing assets.

A vibrant ocean city, Halifax's defining maritime culture drives the city's economy and provides competitive advantages in key growth sectors such as ocean technology, defence and advanced manufacturing, and transportation and logistics. As the economic hub of Atlantic Canada, Halifax supports and drives growth in the province and the region.

Halifax is one of Canada's oldest cities and the largest by land mass at 5,500 km<sup>2</sup>. Residents and tourists alike enjoy our distinct east coast lifestyle, our blend of historic and modern, and naturally beautiful urban and rural communities. We have one of the largest concentrations of post-secondary institutions and among the best educated workforces in North America, providing a diverse talent pool to support business growth.

A major transportation and logistics hub, Halifax is one of Canada's main gateways for moving goods in and out of North America, traveling to and from international destinations, and delivering services across European, North American and Caribbean time zones.

### Ocean Advantage

Halifax is home to Maritime Forces Atlantic and hundreds of scientists engaged in ocean R&D at Dalhousie University, Defence Research and Development Canada, the Bedford Institute of Oceanography and the Nova Scotia Community College. The new Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship being built at the former coast guard base in Dartmouth will provide the infrastructure needed to accelerate knowledge transfer, commercialize research and incubate ocean-technology start-ups.

Halifax's ocean sector is broad, and includes goods and services providers engaged in oceans technology, fisheries and aquaculture, life sciences, shipbuilding, and ocean observation, as well as marine-centric defence and security, transportation, life sciences, energy and coastal tourism. Local companies within the sector often play in two or more of these ocean industries.

Access to marine shipping lanes and the Port of Halifax provide the city with the transportation network and infrastructure to benefit from growing global trade in key markets like the EU. Halifax is also a major resupply point for the oil and natural gas reserves on the Atlantic Shelf. Both Shell Canada and BP continue to maintain their major investments in offshore oil development despite significantly lower oil prices. This is a good sign that they have long-term intentions to stay in the region.

Halifax's ocean advantage presents major opportunities to strengthen the city's reputation as a leader in ocean science, technology and defence, while boosting growth in several key industries.

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## Educated/Innovative Community

Halifax is a smart city. Our six universities and three community college campuses enrol over 35,000 students annually (including 6,000 international students) and produce a highly skilled workforce. In fact, 70% of our workforce has post-secondary certification. Our universities and colleges support numerous knowledge-based industries in the city including financial services, ICT, life sciences and ocean technology. Halifax serves as a healthcare service hub for the Atlantic Region, and it has one of the largest concentrations of life sciences and medical research facilities in Canada including the IWK Health Centre, the Queen Elizabeth Health Sciences Centre and the Life Sciences Research Institute.

## Excellent Rural/Urban Lifestyle

Halifax is a great place to live, work and play. The city offers the amenities and opportunities of a modern, urban centre combined with rural charm, natural beauty and an abundance of recreation opportunities.

Residents enjoy life and work in more than 200 rural, urban and suburban communities that boast a variety of businesses, dining, nightlife, and arts and entertainment options. There are few places in the world where you can get from the boardroom to the beach in less than 30 minutes. Halifax is one of them. The lifestyle we enjoy attracts new residents, visitors and businesses, and is a valuable lever in growing our economy.

### Municipal Owned Parks and Recreation Assets

- 60 Recreation and Cultural Facilities
- 7 Indoor Pools
- 20 Ice Surfaces
- 878 Parks
- 324 Sports/Ball Fields
- 314 Sport Courts
- 395 Playgrounds
- 22 Beaches
- 6 Splash Pads
- 4 Outdoor Pools
- 222 kms of Linear Trails
- 532 Trails and Pathways
- 13 BMX Parks
- 12 Skate Parks
- 149 Public Boat Launches
- 6 All Weather Sports Fields

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## STRATEGIC GOALS

The existing foundational documents, noted on page 8, set several growth goals for Halifax and Nova Scotia, and along with input from the engagement sessions, helped establish a solid framework for the next five years.

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There are four five-year strategic goals, and each one has 4-7 objectives. A 1-to-2 year action plan will summarize what needs to be done to achieve each objective, the lead organization, the partners involved, the outcome measures, and alignment with foundation documents.

The first three goals are accompanied by a set of measurements that indicate if a goal is being attained.

### **Strategic Goals:**

- **PROMOTE AND MAXIMIZE GROWTH**
- **ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT**
- **MAKE HALIFAX A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK**
- **ALIGN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



# Promote and Maximize Growth

## Grow Halifax’s GDP to \$22.5 billion by 2021

This goal focuses on making it easier to do business in Halifax and capitalizing on the city’s best opportunities for growth. This means working with businesses to get the most out of our economy. Halifax can grow if businesses innovate and become more competitive and globally focused. Attracting and retaining talent will largely depend on available employment opportunities. Supporting high-value opportunities will strengthen the economy and make it more appealing for people to live and work in Halifax.

Actions are aimed at improving regulatory and service efficiency, making it easier to start and grow a business, helping companies compete both here and abroad, supporting investment in innovation, and finding the best way to leverage our competitive advantages and growth opportunities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values)
1.1 Make Halifax an easier place to do business	Increase average annual income growth (1.2% growth in personal income per capita in 2015)
1.2 Work nationally and internationally to attract investment and increase trade	Increase the total number of jobs (224,100 employed in 2015) Increase the share of full-time work (83% of jobs were full-time in 2015)
1.3 Improve conditions for innovation and entrepreneurialism	Increase the share of business that considers Halifax an above-average place to do business (15% of businesses in Spring 2015)
1.4 Collaborate around major projects to maximize their impact on the economy	Reduce commercial vacancy rates in the downtown (14.3% vacancy in Q4 2015)
1.6 Promote clustering of people and business in urban and rural areas	Increase the commercial property tax base (\$8.2 billion in 2016) Establish publicly reported performance measures for municipal services; measure against service standards with set goals for improvement

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## Attract and Retain Talent

### Grow Halifax's labour force to 271,000 by 2021

This goal focuses on making sure we have the workforce needed to grow our economy. Though Halifax is doing better than the rest of the province, the effects of an aging workforce are already being felt. Three consecutive years of lacklustre employment growth are the result of steady declines in the labour force participation rate. We need to increase our population to fuel business and economic growth and reduce the fiscal burden on the province.

Actions focus on talent attraction and retention; bridging the gap between industry, education and talent; and removing systemic barriers to employment.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
2.1 Create opportunities for youth, including international students, to put down roots in Halifax.	Increase Halifax's overall population growth (1.0% growth in 2015)
2.2 Attract immigrants and expatriates to Halifax	Increase net interprovincial migration of youth ages 20-29 to Nova Scotia (-1,300 annual avg. 2010-2015)  Grow the international student body (5,800 in 2014-15) and the gross share that transition into permanent residency (4% in 2015)
2.3 Promote private sector involvement in co-op and experiential learning	Increase net international immigration to Halifax (+2,085 annual avg. 2010-2015)
2.4 Increase workforce attachment and combat systemic barriers	Attain at least the provincial average workforce participation rate (69.1% in 2011) for marginalized groups, especially the African Nova Scotian community (64.7% in 2011).

## Make Halifax a Better Place to Live and Work

### Grow Halifax’s population to 470,000 by 2021

This goal focuses on improving and showcasing our quality of life to attract residents, workers and visitors. Now more than ever, companies are investing in the cities that have the “softer” assets employees want – things like: cultural and recreational amenities; safe, inclusive and resilient communities; family-friendly policies and services; and, active and efficient transportation options.

Actions focus on improving cultural assets, mobility, inclusiveness, and affordability while also ensuring that we market a strong and clear message about Halifax’s great quality of life.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
3.1 Ensure access to arts, culture and recreational assets within Halifax	Increase the share of Halifax residents who have a strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging to their community (71.3% in 2014)
3.2 Increase Halifax's environmental sustainability and resiliency	Increase the supply of non-market housing as a proportion of total HRM households (4% in 2015) Raise the mean score from Halifax residents on various quality of life indicators as measured by the City Matters survey (baselines from 2014). These include:
3.3 Make Halifax more children/family-friendly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good place to raise a family (7.7)</li> <li>- Outdoor recreational facilities (7.3)</li> <li>- Indoor recreational facilities (7.2)</li> </ul>
3.4 Make Halifax a more affordable place to live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Housing affordability (6.1)</li> <li>- Arts and cultural events (7.4)</li> <li>- City is easy to get around (6.6)</li> </ul>
3.5 Improve mobility so that people can live and work more effectively	Increase the annual occupancy/room nights sold in metro Halifax (1,359,000 in 2015)  Increase library programming attendance (159,132 in 2014-15) and in-person visits (2,881,087 in 2014-15)
3.6 Foster cultural proficiency and social inclusion	
3.7 Showcase Halifax to encourage people to visit, live and work here	

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## Align Economic Development

This goal focuses on increasing collaboration and aligning economic development organizations, policies and programs. Alignment and collaboration are critical for this plan to succeed. Business, government and industry all have a role to play in making Halifax a more vibrant, prosperous city.

The actions recommended to achieve this goal focus on sharing research and best practices; increasing engagement with the African Nova Scotian and urban Aboriginal communities on economic development matters; identifying and undertaking joint research to improve economic development across the province; aligning value propositions; and monitoring and taking action on high-value economic opportunities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	MEASUREMENT
4.1 Increase awareness of the role Halifax plays in Nova Scotia's and Canada's economic development.	Value propositions are aligned across organizations  When surveyed, economic development partners see alignment and collaboration as functional and useful (e.g., partners understand each other's objectives, communicate regularly, collaborate in meaningful way)
4.2 Improve coordination around economic development activities	Economic growth plan indicators and activities are measured regularly through quarterly reports and the <i>Halifax Index</i>
4.3 Monitor progress and adapt actions for the economic growth plan as required	

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## IMPLEMENTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Business leaders and government at all levels agree that there is strength in partnership and working together to achieve our goals. For these economic development plans to work, our city and province need to be strategically aligned, understanding that there is a role for everyone to play.

We will build on progress by working as a team – a real team – to grow the economies of Halifax and Nova Scotia. We will develop shared goals, targets and terminology. For a look at who’s involved in doing this, see Appendix 1.

Engaging the broader community is also very important to our success. One way to do this is through the introduction of an annual Halifax Economic Forum focused on tackling key issues and identifying actions and accountabilities.

Halifax’s 2016-21 Economic Growth Plan will inform and shape municipal decision-making and activity over the next five years. It will guide the activities of the Halifax Partnership and other economic development agencies, and it will influence and align stakeholders to support Halifax’s economic growth. It will be a catalyst for change.

We have developed an implementation plan for the first two years that spells out what will be done, who will lead, who will be involved, and how we will measure success. Complex initiatives will have their own implementation plans developed by lead organizations with support from partners, and some activities will require additional financial and human resources from public and private sector partners.

### ADAPTING THE ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN

As we implemented the previous economic strategy, we realized that a lot can change, and probably will, over the course of five years. Three years into our last strategy’s implementation process, we needed to develop new actions and improve upon the original thinking.

Going forward, this plan needs to be flexible enough to accommodate change. That’s why it has a rolling framework. While the high-level elements from the vision to the goals and objectives remain constant, the actions can be adapted as needed to reflect lessons learned and new information.

### GOVERNANCE

#### **Halifax Partnership Board of Directors**

The Halifax Partnership’s Board of Directors will provide oversight and strategic guidance, keeping the Plan focused and coordinated.

#### **Halifax Regional Council and Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee**

The Mayor and members of Halifax Regional Council and the Community Planning and Economic Development Standing Committee will provide oversight and ensure the plan’s goals are aligned with the municipality’s programs and economic priorities.

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## IMPLEMENTATION ROLES

### **Halifax Regional Municipality**

The Halifax Regional Municipality will use the economic growth plan as a guide for making decisions and leading initiatives in support of the goals and objectives as outlined in the implementation plan. The Municipality is the lead on many of the actions defined in the plan.

### **Halifax Partnership**

The Halifax Partnership will be the coordinating body responsible for tracking and monitoring progress against goals and objectives. The Partnership will also lead many of the actions defined in the plan. It will prepare an annual progress report and present findings at an annual economic forum held each spring.

### **Stakeholders**

Halifax Regional Municipality and the Halifax Partnership will engage with a variety of stakeholders to implement the plan. These include:

- Private Sector
- Provincial Government
- Crown Corporations
- Federal Government
- Municipal Economic Development Stakeholders
  - Destination Halifax
  - Business Improvement Districts
  - Halifax Chamber of Commerce
- Universities and the Community College
- Communities at Risk of Exclusion/Traditionally Marginalized Groups
- Not-for-Profit Sector
- Arts and Culture Sector

See Appendix 1 for a detailed overview of Economic Players and Stakeholders.

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## MEASUREMENT

### THE HALIFAX INDEX

*The Halifax Index* was created as part of the previous economic strategy to measure Halifax's economic and community advances. It is a tool for tracking progress on the plan and serves as an annual call to action on key challenges and economic opportunities. We will continue to use *The Halifax Index* to measure progress against this plan, to provide insight on new opportunities, and to act as a tool for course correction and adjustment as needed. The Halifax Partnership will release the Index each spring.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Economic Players and Stakeholders

#### PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector drives economic growth. It is the primary source of all economic activity, generating jobs and income, exports, and tax revenues. A robust and growing private sector provides the economic capacity to afford a high quality of life, including public and non-profit services. In addition to building the province's productive capacity, the private sector also makes investments that enhance our quality of life. The Emera Oval and the Scotiabank Centre are just two examples of private businesses that have invested in Halifax facilities and amenities.

Over 120 private sector companies invest in the Partnership to support economic development and growth in Halifax. Partnership investors, industry associations, and business leaders from our priority sectors were actively engaged in developing this plan. Continued, and increased, private sector engagement and investment in economic growth will be key to successfully implementing the plan and achieving our vision.

#### MUNICIPAL STAKEHOLDERS

##### **Destination Halifax**

Destination Halifax is the dedicated tourism marketing organization for Halifax and is a partnership of the Hotel Association of Nova Scotia, the Halifax Region and Tourism Nova Scotia.

#### BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

##### **Halifax Chamber of Commerce**

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce is Halifax's oldest advocacy organization. It acts as the voice of business on topics such as taxation, health in the workplace, and regional planning.

##### **Business Associations**

Halifax's business community is supported by a variety of industry, business, and professional associations. These associations contribute to the ongoing growth and development of our businesses as well as the continuing education of our workforce.

#### BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

There are eight business Improvement Districts (BID) in Halifax: Downtown Dartmouth; Main Street Dartmouth; Spring Garden Road; Downtown Halifax; Quinpool Road; North End; Spryfield; and Sackville. The BIDs are special assessment districts where business people join together to promote and improve the economic vitality of the area. In Halifax, BIDs work closely with elected officials and municipal staff and partner organizations to voice their collective concerns, monitor business regulations, and obtain support for their business development projects.

#### PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AND AGENCIES



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### **Provincial Departments**

The departments of Municipal Affairs, Business, Labour and Advanced Education, and Immigration Nova Scotia all play important roles in growing Halifax's economy – from funding economic development activities to attracting and retaining talent to supporting business growth. The provincial government also sets the legislative framework in which the Halifax Regional Municipality operates.

### **Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI)**

NSBI is the province's business development agency responsible for attracting global investment to the province and working with Nova Scotia companies to increase exports. NSBI and the Halifax Partnership work closely together to attract new investment and help existing companies expand their operations.

### **Trade Centre Limited**

Trade Centre Limited is a provincial Crown corporation responsible for attracting and hosting meetings, conventions, and entertainment, cultural and sporting events. It welcomes over 700,000 attendees each year to its various Halifax facilities.

### **New Convention Centre**

Halifax Convention Centre Corporation will operate the new convention centre.

### **Waterfront Development**

Waterfront Development is a Crown corporation that works to harness the potential of Halifax's waterfronts to stimulate business investment and community pride, and provide quality experiences for residents and visitors. Among other projects, Waterfront Development is leading the redevelopment of the former coast guard base on the Dartmouth waterfront for the new Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship.

## **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The federal government recognizes the important role cities play in growing Canada's economy and invests in cities to accelerate growth. Global Affairs Canada provides funding to support direct foreign investment in Halifax, while Citizenship and Immigration Canada funds programs such as the Halifax Partnership's National Connector Program.

The new federal government has promised to spend \$60 billion on infrastructure over 10 years in Canadian cities. Public transit, green infrastructure and social infrastructure like community housing are the government's three key priorities for spending. Halifax has many investment worthy infrastructure projects that we anticipate the federal government will support.

## **POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS**

Halifax's post-secondary education sector continues to produce a highly educated workforce. In the 2014-15 school year, there were 31,000 students registered at the city's six universities. Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) enrolments in Halifax hit their highest level during the 2014-15 academic year exceeding 4,600 students. NSCC continues to support the growing and expanding needs of the local labour market and has several industry partnerships in place that help them produce the skills businesses need, now and in the future. The student body at Halifax universities is becoming increasingly diverse; the number of international and out-of-province students reached their highest levels during the 2014-15 school year. In addition to providing an educated workforce, universities also

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account for 40% of R&D spending in Nova Scotia. More collaboration between the public, private and academic communities would be a boon to the research and innovation culture in our city and province.

#### **COMMUNITIES AT RISK OF EXCLUSION/TRADITIONALLY MARGINALIZED GROUPS**

Communities at risk of exclusion/traditionally marginalized groups include African Nova Scotian communities, Urban Aboriginals, new immigrants, and persons with disabilities. These communities and groups are those which are generally excluded from the dominant mainstream of productive activity and social and economic reproduction. They experience relatively limited control over and access to valued resources including health, education, housing, income, employment, and leisure activities. Also, these communities and groups tend to be negatively affected by inadequate social participation and lack of cultural and educational capital to attain acceptable standards of well-being. The economic dislocation and marginalization experienced at the individual, community and societal levels also excludes these communities and groups from attaining fulfilling and full economic participation and in turn impacts their lived experiences.

#### **NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR**

The not-for-profit sector is a significant contributor to the economies of Halifax and Nova Scotia. It employs thousands of Nova Scotians and helps build vibrant, sustainable, and welcoming communities. According to research by the Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia (CSC), 450,000 residents volunteer a collective total of 50 million hours each year, which is worth \$1.8 billion in services to the economy. This makes Nova Scotia the province with the most volunteer hours per capita. The CSC also estimates that there are over 6,200 non-profit and volunteer organizations in the province, and that non-profit organizations employ 36,000 people – 7% of the province’s workforce.

#### **ARTS AND CULTURE SECTOR**

Arts, culture and recreation are at the heart of any vibrant community. Arts and culture organizations are both employers of artists and producers of art and culture that reflect our city’s diversity and quality of life. A strong creative community and a variety of recreational facilities and activities are important in promoting a healthy lifestyle. They make Halifax an attractive place to live and work. The opening of the new Halifax Central Library resulted in a record year for the city’s public libraries (2.9 million visitors in 2015) and a creative rethinking of libraries as an important public space.

## Appendix 2 - Alignment Matrix

ALIGNMENT SUMMARY										
5 Year Strategic Goals	5 Year Objectives	AGREATER Halifax 2011-16 Economic Strategy	We Choose Now & Now or Never	Truth and Reconciliation	Regional Municipal Plan	Halifax Brand Strategy	Halifax Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan	Provincial Mandate	Federal Mandate	NSBI Business Plan
Promote & Maximize Growth	Make Halifax an easier place to do business.	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Work nationally and internationally to attract investment and increase trade.	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
	Improve the conditions for innovation and entrepreneurialism.	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
	Collaborate around major projects to maximize their impact on the economy.	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
	Promote clustering of people and business in urban and rural areas	✓			✓					✓
Attract & Retain Talent	Create opportunities for youth, including international students, to put down roots in Halifax	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
	Attract immigrants and expatriates to Halifax.	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	
	Promote private sector involvement in co-op and experiential learning.	✓	✓					✓	✓	
	Increase workforce attachment and combat systemic barriers.	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	

ALIGNMENT SUMMARY										
5 Year Strategic Goals	5 Year Objectives	AGREATER Halifax 2011-16 Economic Strategy	We Choose Now & Now or Never	Truth and Reconciliation	Regional Municipal Plan	Halifax Brand Strategy	Halifax Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan	Provincial Mandate	Federal Mandate	NSBI Business Plan
<b>Make Halifax a Better Place to Live &amp; Work</b>	Ensure access to arts, culture, recreation, and natural assets in Halifax.	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	
	Increase Halifax's environmental sustainability and resiliency	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	
	Make Halifax more children/family-friendly.			✓	✓			✓	✓	
	Make Halifax a more affordable place to live.			✓						
	Improve mobility so that people can live and work more effectively in Halifax.	✓			✓			✓	✓	
	Foster cultural proficiency and social inclusion.	✓		✓						
	Showcase Halifax to encourage people to visit, live, and work here.	✓					✓	✓	✓	
<b>Align Economic Development</b>	Increase awareness of the role Cities play in economic development	✓	✓							
	Increase awareness of the role Halifax plays in Nova Scotia's and Canada's economic development.	✓	✓				✓	✓		
	Improve coordination of economic development activities	✓	✓			✓				✓
	Monitor progress and adapt actions for the Economic Growth Plan.	✓	✓							

### Appendix 3 - Engagement Sessions and Key Messages

Engagement Session	Business Climate	Attract & Retain Talent	Drive Innovation & Entrepreneurialism	Better place to live and work	Oceans	Tourism	Collaboration	Positive Attitude	Maximizing Growth	Education
HP Investor's Session	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue
Aerospace & Defence	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue	White	Light Blue	White
Transportation & Logistics	Light Blue	White	White	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White
Oceans	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Dark Blue
Energy	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue	White	Light Blue	White
ICT	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White	White	White	White	White	Dark Blue
Finance & Insurance	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White	White	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue
Development & Construction	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue	White	White	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White
Entrepreneurship	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	White	White	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue
Business	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	White	White	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue
HP Board Members	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	White	White	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White
Urban Aboriginal Groups	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue
African Nova Scotians	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White	White	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue
HRM Directors	Dark Blue	Light Blue	White	Light Blue	White	White	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White
Department of Business & NSBI	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	White	White	White	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	White
Destination Halifax & TCL	Light Blue	White	White	Light Blue	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White
University Presidents	White	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue
Digital Media	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White	White	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue
Population & Talent	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue
Community	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	White	White	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue
Environment	Dark Blue	White	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White	White	White	White	White
Creative Industries	Dark Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Dark Blue	White	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	White	Light Blue
BIDs & BIDSs Like	Dark Blue	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White	White
Planning & Priorities	Light Blue	Light Blue	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	Dark Blue	White

Dark Blue = Strongly identified  
 Light Blue = Moderately identified  
 White = Not identified

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Active Transportation Plan** – an HRM policy document providing direction for the development of an active transportation network in Halifax
- **Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC)** - an independent, non-partisan research and educational institution formed to promote the economic development of the Atlantic Region of Canada.
- **APEC Major Projects Inventory** - an annual project-by-project inventory of the major investment projects proposed for Atlantic Canada. A major project is defined as any capital project valued at \$25 million or more (\$10 million or more in Prince Edward Island)
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) –
- **Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA)** - a free trade agreement between Canada and the European Union. Negotiations were concluded in August 2014. The agreement is to be approved by the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament. If approved, the agreement would come into effect in 2016 at the earliest.
- **Conference Board of Canada** – an independent, evidence-based, applied research organization in Canada specializing in economic trends, organizational performance and public policy issues.
- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** – the market value of all finished goods and services produced within a region in a given period
- **Halifax Connector Program** – the Halifax Partnership’s networking program that connects newcomers and international students to employers and community leaders in Halifax so they can build a solid network, join the workforce and settle successfully in our community
- **Halifax Gateway Council** – a forum for transportation stakeholders in the Halifax region to work collectively to improve the competitiveness and efficiency of goods and passenger movements through Atlantic Canada’s primary gateway
- **Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)** – For the purposes of this economic plan, HRM refers to Halifax’s municipal government. Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) is the legal name for Halifax. The regional municipality consists of four former municipalities that were amalgamated in 1996; Halifax, Dartmouth, Bedford, and the Municipality of Halifax County. The municipality was rebranded in 2014 and is now called Halifax.
- **HRM Corporate Plan** – HRM’s main strategic planning tool and the foundation on which HRM’s annual budget and business plans are built
- **HRM Regional Plan** – the region’s blueprint for when, where and how future growth should happen in Halifax over a 25-year period.
- **Now or Never: An Urgent Call to Action for Nova Scotians** - report of the Nova Scotia Commission on Building [Nova Scotia’s] New Economy
- **Quality of Place** – the characteristics of a community that affect the quality of life of the people who live and work there (e.g. diversity, environment, arts and culture)
- **R&D** – Research and Development
- **Regional Centre** – defined as the urban core of the Halifax Regional Municipality. It is composed of the Halifax Peninsula and Dartmouth within the Circumferential Highway on either side of Halifax Harbour, and has a total land area of 33 square kilometres.
- **We Choose Now** - economic development plan for Nova Scotia developed by the ONE Nova Scotia Coalition.



## **ATTACHMENT 2**

### *Halifax's Economic Growth Plan Year 1-2 Actions*



2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1. PROMOTE &amp; MAXIMIZE GROWTH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Grow Halifax's GDP to \$22.5 billion by 2021</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1.1 Make Halifax an easier place to do business.</b></p>	Develop an approach to red tape reduction for HRM.	HRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase average annual income growth <i>(1.2% growth in personal income per capita in 2015)</i></li> <li>● Increase the total number of jobs <i>(224,100 employed in 2015)</i></li> <li>● Increase the share of full-time work <i>(83% of jobs were full-time in 2015)</i></li> <li>● Increase the share of business that considers Halifax an above-average place to do business <i>(15% of businesses in Spring 2015)</i></li> <li>● Reduce commercial vacancy rates in the downtown <i>(14.3% vacancy in Q4 2015)</i></li> <li>● Increase the commercial property tax base <i>(\$8.2 billion in 2016)</i></li> <li>● Establish publicly reported performance measures for municipal services; measure against service standards with set goals for improvement.</li> </ul>
		Develop and adopt the new Centre Plan that will replace planning strategies in the Regional Centre.	HRM	
		Benchmark and communicate approvals' standards and timelines to the public.	HRM	
		As part of the Halifax Charter Review, identify potential powers and approaches HRM could adopt to grow Halifax's economy.	HRM	
		Develop HRM's customer service strategy to improve service to businesses and residents.	HRM	
		Implement HRM's Planning & Development's organizational renewal program to improve and streamline legislation, processes, supporting tools and technologies.	HRM	
		Benchmark business climate indicators and communicate them to business.	Halifax Partnership	
		Enhance the Halifax Partnership's Business Retention and Expansion Program to connect business to resources and inform regulators of company common issues.	Halifax Partnership	

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
		In collaboration with economic development stakeholders, create an online business support hub for businesses to access the services, programs and tools they need.	Halifax Partnership	
		Provide the most up-to-date, relevant economic information on Halifax to help businesses relocate, stay and grow in Halifax.	Halifax Partnership	
		Provide aftercare to new companies that have chosen Halifax as a new location for their business and make connections to the programs, resources and talent needed for their continued growth.	Halifax Partnership	
		Communicate to the local business community opportunities arising from new international trade agreements.	Halifax Partnership	

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
	<p><b>1.2 Work nationally and internationally to attract investment and increase trade.</b></p>	<p>In collaboration with economic development partners, refine and amplify Halifax's value proposition to position Halifax on the world stage.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	
<p>Ensure alignment and collaboration on investment attraction and FDI aftercare activities related to Halifax.</p>		<p>Halifax Partnership</p>		
<p>Leverage existing local, national and international relationships, and cultivate new relationships, (e.g. International Partnerships, WECP, CCCA) to increase the awareness of the Halifax value proposition.</p>		<p>Halifax Partnership</p>		
<p>Expand the Mayor's Celebrate Business Program to include targeted visits to major centres in Canada and the United States that showcase Halifax's value proposition.</p>		<p>Co-Leads: HRM and Halifax Partnership</p>		
<p>Assess the role the Municipality could play in a potential air route development fund to open direct commercial and passenger routes to other destinations.</p>		<p>Co-Leads: HRM and Halifax Partnership</p>		
<p>Produce a 5-Year Strategic Growth Plan for the Halifax Gateway.</p>		<p>Halifax Partnership</p>		

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
	<b>1.3 Improve the conditions for innovation and entrepreneurialism.</b>	Increase awareness of R&D capabilities and interests within Halifax universities and opportunities for business to connect.	Halifax Partnership	
		Increase connectivity with and build capacity of African Nova Scotia and urban aboriginal organizations engaged in economic development.	Co-Leads: HRM and Halifax Partnership	
		Facilitate connections between small and large businesses around opportunities for increased innovation.	Halifax Partnership	
		Promote the growing network of for-profit business and social enterprise incubation facilities that offer shared space and access to business expertise.	Halifax Partnership	
		Through the SmartBusiness Program connect businesses with post-secondary R&D capabilities and other resources.	Halifax Partnership	

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
	<b>1.4 Collaborate around major projects to maximize their impact on the economy.</b>	Develop a "SWOT team" approach for economic development players to maximize existing and proposed major projects e.g., Shell/BP, Shipbuilding (including supply chain opportunities)	Halifax Partnership	
		Secure federal funding to undertake key infrastructure projects.	HRM	
		Capitalize on major project opportunities to attract new foreign direct investment.	Halifax Partnership	
		Work with industry stakeholders to raise awareness and maximize major project opportunities in the Oceans Sector (e.g. COVE).	Halifax Partnership	
		Complete the initial planning phases of the Cogswell lands redevelopment, including the creation of a design plan for Council approval.	HRM	
	<b>1.5 Promote clustering of people and business in urban and rural areas</b>	Ensure that an adequate supply of industrial lands is available to support economic development objectives.	HRM	
		Assess options to divert the movement of goods through downtown Halifax.	HRM	
		Implement the density bonus study findings to increase density in the Regional Centre.	HRM	

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
		In consultation with rural partners, assess the feasibility of a Halifax Rural Index.	Co-Lead: HRM and Halifax Partnership	
		Assess the feasibility of a rural action committee to foster rural economic development.	HRM	
		Contribute to the development of the rural innovation and entrepreneurship strategy described in the We Choose Now Report.	HRM	

**2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2**

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
<p><b>2. ATTRACT AND RETAIN TALENT</b></p> <p><i>Grow Halifax's labour force to 271,000 by 2021</i></p>	<p><b>2.1 Create opportunities for youth, including international students, to put down roots in Halifax.</b></p>	<p>Continue the Connector Program to connect local and international graduates, young professionals and immigrants to the labour force.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase Halifax's overall population growth <i>(1.0% growth in 2015)</i></li> <li>● Increase net interprovincial migration of youth ages 20-29 to Nova Scotia <i>(-1,300 annual avg. 2010-2015)</i></li> <li>● Grow the international student body (5,800 in 2014-15) and the gross share that transition into permanent residency <i>(4% in 2015)</i></li> <li>● Increase net international immigration to Halifax <i>(+2,085 annual avg. 2010-2015)</i></li> <li>● Attain at least the provincial average workforce participation rate (69.1% in 2011) for marginalized groups, especially the African Nova Scotian community <i>(64.7% in 2011)</i>.</li> </ul>
		<p>Through the Game Changer Action Plan, raise local business community's awareness on the benefits of hiring young professionals without experience.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	
		<p>Increase the business community's awareness of, and access to, labour market information and resources.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	
		<p>Assemble existing, and develop new, marketing collateral and events as part of a "Welcome Like No Other Program" targeting international students and immigrants.</p>	<p>Co-Leads: HRM and Halifax Partnership</p>	
		<p>Communicate private sector labour market needs to the post-secondary/public sectors to improve programs and the supply of labour.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	
	<p><b>2.2 Attract immigrants and expatriates to Halifax.</b></p>	<p>Compile an inventory and increase awareness of the initiatives/programs that assist immigrants integrate into Canada's labour market.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	
		<p>Share Halifax value propositions with universities, employers and public sector partners working to attract students and employees to Halifax.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
 ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
		Work with provincial stakeholders to identify ways to leverage Halifax's migrant communities to attract talent and investment to Halifax.	Halifax Partnership	



2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
	<b>2.3 Promote private sector involvement in co-op and experiential learning.</b>	Expand the Halifax Connector Program and Game Changer Action Plan to include experiential learning.	Halifax Partnership	
		Support the efforts of organizations working to promote skilled trades and apprenticeship-related career opportunities for youth.	Halifax Partnership	
		Support the rollout of the Connector Program across the province.	Halifax Partnership	
	<b>2.4 Increase workforce attachment and combat systemic barriers.</b>	In collaboration with provincial partners, BBI, the Mi'kmaw Friendship Centre and education providers, assess existing programs, services and outcomes related to the workforce attachment of urban aboriginals, African Nova Scotians and other groups at risk of exclusion.	Halifax Partnership	
		Continue the Bridging the Gap internship program to connect new graduates to municipal public service, and share program resources with other employers in Halifax.	HRM	
		Review experience requirements of HRM positions to increase youth talent in the municipal public service.	HRM	
		Review/improve HRM HR policies from a diversity and inclusion perspective.	HRM	

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
		Explore opportunities to connect newcomers, African Nova Scotian, urban aboriginal, youth and persons with disabilities to employment opportunities at HRM.	HRM	

**2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2**

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
<p><b>3. Make Halifax a Better Place to Live &amp; Work</b></p> <p><i>Grow Halifax's population to 470,000 by 2021.</i></p>	<p><b>3.1 Ensure access to arts, culture, and recreation, and natural assets in Halifax.</b></p>	<p>Develop and implement an open space and greenbelting priorities plan for Halifax.</p>	<p>HRM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the share of Halifax residents who have a strong or somewhat strong sense of belonging to their community (71.3% in 2014)</li> </ul>
		<p>Develop and a Parks and Recreation strategic plan that ensures needs-driven, fiscally sustainable and inclusive parks and recreation assets and programming.</p>	<p>HRM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the supply of non-market housing as a proportion of total HRM households (4% in 2015)</li> </ul>
		<p>Develop and implement the Culture and Heritage Priorities Plan.</p>	<p>HRM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Raise the mean score from Halifax residents on various quality of life indicators as measured by the City Matters survey (baselines from 2014). These include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "Good place to raise a family" (7.7)</li> <li>○ "Outdoor recreational facilities" (7.3)</li> <li>○ "Indoor recreational facilities" (7.2)</li> <li>○ "Housing affordability" (6.1)</li> <li>○ "Arts and cultural events" (7.4)</li> <li>○ "City is easy to get around" (6.6)</li> <li>○ "% who feel very safe or mostly safe"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		<p>Ensure HRM's culture investments reflect Halifax's diversity.</p>	<p>HRM</p>	
	<p><b>3.2 Increase Halifax's environmental sustainability and resiliency.</b></p>	<p>Develop a Community Energy Plan (Priorities Plan of the Regional Municipal Planning Strategy).</p>	<p>HRM</p>	
		<p>Implement a new 3-year solar city community program with an expanded focus on solar air and photovoltaic as well as hot water.</p>	<p>HRM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the annual occupancy/room nights sold in metro Halifax (1,359,000 in 2015)</li> </ul>
		<p>Complete floodplain studies, overland flooding/stormwater research and policy development.</p>	<p>HRM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase library programming attendance (159,132 in 2014-15) and in-person visits (2,881,087 in 2014-15)</li> </ul>
		<p>Increase awareness of the programs and services available to families/children.</p>	<p>HRM</p>	

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
	3.3 Make Halifax more family/children-friendly.	Increase low-income groups' and individuals' access to recreation programs.	HRM	
	3.4 Make Halifax a more affordable place to live.	Participate on the Housing and Homelessness Partnership and Affordable Housing Working Group to determine appropriate mechanisms to support and encourage a range of affordable housing in HRM.	HRM	

2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
	<p><b>3.5 Improve mobility so that people can live and work more effectively.</b></p>	Develop a long-term streetscaping program for the Regional Centre.	HRM	
Improve parking access by implementing new technologies and informing the public about parking availability in the urban core.		HRM		
Implement new transit technology, and seek Council approval to implement the Moving Forward Together Plan for Halifax Transit.		HRM		
Prepare a long-term Integrated Mobility Plan for Council approval.		HRM		
Develop a road and pedestrian safety strategy.		HRM		

**2016-21 Economic Strategy  
ACTION PLAN for YEARS 1 & 2**

GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
	<b>3.6 Foster cultural proficiency and social inclusion.</b>	Research and share successful practices with business on how to be culturally competence/proficient.	Halifax Partnership	
		In accordance with HRM's statement on aboriginal reconciliation, develop a plan to engage urban aboriginals.	HRM	
		Develop and implement a plan to make HRM facilities accessible.	HRM	
	<b>3.7 Showcase Halifax to encourage people to visit, live, and work here.</b>	With economic development and tourism partners, present trade and investment opportunities, as well as tourism offerings to conference delegates.	Halifax Partnership	
		Proactively communicate the full range of HRM's Parks and Recreation assets and service offerings.	HRM	
		Articulate HRM's role and approach to tourism, festivals and special events.	HRM	
		Leverage the media and Halifax Partnership private sector investor network to promote examples of Halifax's business culture and success stories.	Halifax Partnership	
		Develop and publish the Halifax Index -- a single information source of annual data on the state of Halifax's economy, people, quality of place and sustainability.	Halifax Partnership	

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GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
<p>4. Align Economic Development</p> <p><i>Organize economic development actions</i></p>	<p>4.1 Increase awareness of the role Halifax plays in Nova Scotia's and Canada's economic development.</p>	<p>Ensure that Halifax's importance to the provincial economy is a key message in communications.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	<p>Value propositions are aligned across organizations</p> <p>When surveyed, economic development partners see alignment and collaboration as functional and useful (e.g., partners understand each other's objectives, communicate regularly, collaborate in meaningful way)</p> <p>Economic strategy indicators and activities are measured regularly through quarterly reports and the Halifax Index</p>
		<p>Share best practices in economic development with other partners and agencies in Nova Scotia.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	
	<p>4.2 Improve coordination of economic development activities</p>	<p>Develop a mechanism to strengthen BID-HRM collaboration on economic development matters.</p>	<p>HRM</p>	
		<p>Develop an alignment plan for responding to FDI opportunities between Municipal, Provincial, and Federal partners</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	
		<p>With the Province, explore the feasibility of establishing a table of senior government leaders to address, on an ongoing basis, economic development issues of common interest.</p>	<p>Co-Lead: HRM and Halifax Partnership</p>	
		<p>In accordance with <i>We Choose Now</i> Recommendation 1.5, work with the Province to identify business growth opportunities for densely populated disadvantaged communities.</p>	<p>Halifax Partnership</p>	

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GOAL	OBJECTIVES	YEAR 1-2 ACTIONS	MUNICIPAL LEAD	MEASUREMENT (Figures in parentheses indicate baseline values.)
	<b>4.3 Monitor the Economic Strategy's progress and adapt actions as required.</b>	Host the public-facing Annual State of the Economy Forum to unveil the annual Halifax Index and galvanize stakeholders around Halifax's economic challenges and opportunities.	Halifax Partnership	
		Implement a mechanism for sharing Halifax's economic progress with the Province towards the Now or Never and We Choose Now recommended goals and actions.	Halifax Partnership	
		Develop and implement a community outreach plan to ensure stakeholders are informed on the progress and results of the strategy implementation.	Co-Lead: HRM and Halifax Partnership	
		Identify new opportunities for greater collaboration and alignment of economic development priorities with other orders of government and the private sector.	Halifax Partnership and HRM	
		Halifax Partnership Board of Directors monitors Economic Strategy progress and identifies emerging opportunities and challenges. Quarterly progress reports provided to CPED and Regional Council.	Co-Lead: HRM and Halifax Partnership	