

Halifax Regional Municipality



# Corporate Initiatives

*Working together, for a stronger community.*

2008/2009

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**HALIFAX**  
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
**Fast Facts**



**Demographics**

- Geographically the largest municipality in Canada at 5577 square km (2153 square miles)
- Total population 373,000. 10% of HRM's population is rural
- 46% of Nova Scotia's total employment
- 40% of Nova Scotia's total population
- HRM's population is expected to continue its steady growth, adding an additional 100,000 residents over the next 25 years
- Half of HRM's population is under the age of 40, the youngest in Atlantic Canada
- 2nd largest natural ice-free harbour in the world



6 Universities, 3 Community Colleges; total enrollment - 40,000 students.

**Livability**

- Conference Board of Canada ranked Halifax 7th in its first "Benchmarking the Attractiveness of Canada's Cities" report (2007), calling it a leader in education and the environment
- 9th best place to live in Canada in Canadian Business Magazine 2007 ranking
- 2nd most sustainable city in Canada (medium-size) in Corporate Knight's 2007 ranking
- HRM is the Atlantic regional cultural cluster, and 57% of Nova Scotian artists reside in HRM
- 6 universities, 3 community college campuses. University and Community College enrollment totals 40,000 students



Port/Shipping - one of seven significant industries.

**Economy**

- HRM is the regional center of business and finance, hospital/medical services, research facilities, public administration and transportation
- HRM is a \$10 billion economy, dominated by service sector activities
- HRM has strong per capita income and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and generates 47% of provincial GDP
- Home to more than half the province's businesses: information & culture; technical, management and educational services; waste management; finance and insurance
- 5 main economic drivers: universities; defense; hospitals; public administration; banking and insurance
- 7 significant industries: port/shipping; air transportation; rail/truck transportation; professional services; tourism; information and culture; admin and support services
- The average household income is \$55,885 - above the national average

# HALIFAX

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

## Fast Facts



### Governance and Finance

- 1996 amalgamation of Halifax, Dartmouth, Bedford and Halifax County to form Halifax Regional Municipality
- 23 Councillors, each representing one district, and 1 Mayor, elected at large
- HRM adheres to an effective multi-year financial strategy that includes a debt management plan – outstanding debt has decreased by 25% since 1998, exceeding the plan’s goals
- Total debt, excluding Harbour Solutions and refinancing of long-term leases, is down by 21% – from a high of \$347.5 million in 1999 to \$273.2 million in 2007
- HRM received an “A Positive” bond rating from Standard & Poor’s



Property tax accounts for 76% of revenue.

### Fiscal Pressure

- HRM is dependent on property tax for 76% of its revenue—among the highest in Canada
- HRM receives 1.7% of total revenue from the provincial government, less than most other major Canadian city
- HRM is required to collect provincially-mandated expenditures that account for 19% of its total revenue
- Compared to other Canadian cities HRM has: low total property tax per dwelling unit, low operating expenditures per dwelling unit, low operating revenue per dwelling unit and a high dependence on property tax
- HRM has an annual infrastructure funding gap of nearly \$50m



Harbour Solutions Project - Dartmouth Waste Water Treatment Facility

### Environment

- International leader in environmental sustainability i.e. Solid Waste Management strategy
- Harbour Solutions project- largest clean-up of a saltwater body in Canada
- 15 billion litres of wastewater treated per year
- 242 tonnes of paper products and 2,730,000 beverage containers diverted from waste stream, and 100,000 tonnes of organic material composted since 1999
- First major urban area in Canada to reach the 50% waste diversion target
- 100,000+ green (organic) collection carts



To reach employment requirements immigration has to increase by 3,500 per year.

### Labour

- Total labour force of 219,500, equalling a 70% participation rate
- 4.8% unemployment rate, lower than national average
- Heavily reliant on in-migration to support population growth, reliance will increase significantly in near future
- Within 20 years, 40% of NS population will be 55 years or older. To meet projected employment requirements over next 25 years, immigration has to rise to 3,500 per year
- Employment growth out paces population growth
- 67.5% of labour force has completed university, college or trade school. Working-age population of HRM has the highest proportion of graduates from a trade school, college, or university in Canada
- HRM has stable labour relations, including 12-year collective agreements with Halifax Regional Fire and Halifax Regional Police Services

# Strategic Initiatives



## Strategic Initiatives



Very large rural areas.



Deep-water ice-free port - cruise ship docked at Pier 21.



Inter-modal facility

## Introduction

### HRM Vision

The Halifax Regional Municipality is committed to realizing a vision that fosters a community where people love to live, work, learn, play and do business. HRM's 20/20 Visioning exercise created a statement to this effect, which provides the basis for our Goals and Corporate Direction.

*"HRM is a vibrant, caring, and connected community. Our community is built upon diverse cultures, respects the environment and our heritage, supports economic prosperity, and celebrates active citizenship. This vision is based on citizen values that speak to communities working together, economic prosperity as the backbone of a successful community, responsible active citizenship, social justice for all, protecting our natural environment, preserving our heritage strength through diversity, and dedication to a learning culture."*

(Council endorsed October 3, 2000)

HRM came into existence in 1996 as the result of the amalgamation of the former cities of Halifax, Dartmouth, the Town of Bedford and the former County of Halifax. Ours was one of the first of the many municipal amalgamations that took place across the country, beginning in the 1990s.

As a regional municipality, we have a rich history and culture. We are unique in many respects. We are Canada's largest municipality, covering more than 5,600 kilometres, an area larger than the Province of Prince Edward Island. Unlike many other urbanized municipalities, we have a very large rural area.

Halifax continues to serve as the capital city of the Atlantic Provinces. Its economy is strong and diverse. It has one of the largest deepwater, ice-free ports in the world and is one of the top three ports in Canada in terms of traffic, which it handles through its inter-modal facilities. It is the regional centre for government, post-secondary education, research and development, medical and health services and the financial and business community. Despite a lack of growth in the public sector, employment continues to grow. The unemployment rate of 4.8% is among the record lows, and is well below that of most major Canadian cities including Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal and Ottawa.

## ■ Implementation of Strategic Initiatives

The following describes HRM's approved corporate strategies. Deliverables are developed and outlined in annual business plans, and are implemented and integrated into day-to-day operations.

### Council Focus Areas

The Council Focus Areas are the result of a regional strategic priority-setting exercise and an articulation of the areas Council believe require specific and focussed attention. Prioritization of the focus areas takes into consideration the organization's capacity to deliver on each. Priorities are reflected annually in budget and business plans; however, the projects may represent multi-year issues and have to be addresses over a number of budget years.



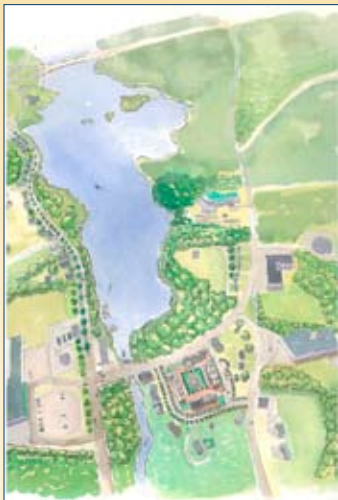
"How Your Municipal Tax Dollars Are Spent", 2008

### Tax Reform:



Council has asked for an appropriate balance between reliance on the market based assessment system and other forms of taxation and charges. An extensive public meeting process was held throughout Spring 2007. Much feedback centered around a system that links municipal taxes more closely to municipal services, a person's ability to pay and encourages greater equity, stability and transparency.

In March 2008, the Tax Reform Committee presented its research to Regional Council and outlined its proposals for the re-design of the property tax system for HRM. A key focus is exploring different tax systems other than ones that rely on market value assessment – for example, basing taxes on a combination of ability to pay and services available to each individual community. Council gave approval for the Tax Reform Committee to undertake public consultations on its proposals throughout Spring 2008. The Committee will return to Council in the fall of 2008 to report on their findings and seek further direction.



VisionHRM - Fall River



VisionHRM Meeting - Penhorn

## Community Development:

The themes captured under community development include youth, community building & Regional Plan implementation. The Regional Plan is a first step to establishing a shared vision of the future of HRM; a vision of healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities, a strong economy and a healthy and sustainable environment. The Regional Plan will direct growth and development in HRM over the next 25 years. There are 22 functional plans under the Regional Plan which focus on environmental sustainability, development issues, transportation, finance, and culture & heritage issues.

### HRMbyDesign

HRMbyDesign is the urban design strategy for the Regional Centre. The overall goals of the project include fostering a positive development climate downtown, making a beautiful public realm, improving heritage protection, investing in public spaces, promoting high quality architecture, and well designed streetscapes. There have been extensive public consultations, citizen and stakeholder workshops, and interviews to incorporate residents' feedback into the process. HRM is seeking the necessary legislative amendments to allow the strategy to proceed.

The project will:

- Improve heritage protection and heritage assistance
- Create clarity and predictability in the development approval process so that quality development can occur more efficiently and with fewer appeals
- Acknowledge that it is people (residents and workers) that make a lively, vibrant downtown and to achieve that we need design standards to improve the beauty of downtown's architecture and public spaces
- Bring more people to live and work in the Regional Centre, by directing a mix of quality residential and commercial development to areas that can both accommodate it and will benefit from it.

### Community Visioning

Key to implementing the Regional Plan is HRM's new Community Visioning program that was piloted in three of HRM's distinct communities - Bedford, Fall River and Musquodoboit Harbour - in 2006/07. The process is intended to allow a community to determine its own priorities over a broad range of HRM programs and services. Regional council approved the visioning project in September 2006, and throughout the following year residents in each of these communities came together to create a long-term vision and action plan. Regional Council endorsed these action plans on October 30, 2007 and phased implementation is underway. Council has also approved the expansion of the program into Spryfield, Middle Sackville and Penhorn areas with launches taking place in May 2008. In June, the VisionHRM project will be presented at the Canadian Institute of Planners National conference in Winnipeg.

The first annual report on Regional Plan implementation went to Regional Council in March 2008. To get more information about the Regional Plan, Community Visioning and the work underway on Functional Plans, visit: <http://www.halifax.ca/regionalplanning/> or [www.halifax.ca/VisionHRM](http://www.halifax.ca/VisionHRM).



## Public Safety:

The umbrella of public safety includes by-law enforcement, Emergency Measures (EMO), Fire Services, Integrated Emergency Services, HRP and RCMP, all collaboratively working together to ensure that our communities are safe, healthy, and well maintained for the citizens of HRM. To address root causes of crime, improve public education, and enhance community safety, HRM Fire and Police are striving to develop new partnerships and enhance existing ones through community and government participation and engagement.

Council will review the findings of several recent studies that will impact on policing, and will provide direction on the next steps that are reasonable and within the mandate of Police and RCMP.

HRM Fire Services is working with the Fire Service Association of Nova Scotia to undertake a Provincial Needs Assessment of Training Facilities, Training Standards and Infrastructure.





Freshwater Brook



## Infrastructure:

This focus area refers to all asset categories including buildings and facilities, solid waste, transit and transportation networks, fleet and supporting infrastructure areas including information technology (IT) and data.

HRM is currently working towards the development of a long-term infrastructure strategy for the region. This strategy will guide infrastructure investment to address asset deterioration and deficiencies through recapitalization while balancing new capability projects required to support the areas of growth. New business unit established to oversee this priority area.

## Transportation

A 5-year Transit Plan has been approved and a Rural Express Transit study is underway. HRM is focussed on resolving transportation challenges and accommodating new traffic demands in a manner which is environmentally responsible. Transit and Ferry Service are key objectives of HRM's 25-year Regional Plan. Through MetroLink (bus rapid transit), a successful jointly-funded project, HRM has reduced more than 400 car trips per day on its major traffic corridors. HarbourLink (fast ferry service) is a higher order transit service that will build on HRM's very successful bus rapid transit program.

## Recreation

HRM is looking forward to hosting the 2011 Canada Winter Games as an opportunity to showcase the municipality and province. Our Mainland Common recreation centre is expected to be a cornerstone of the Games. In keeping with the goal of encouraging an active and healthy population, HRM is expanding its recreation programming to under-served areas. Recreation centres in East Dartmouth and Fall River are expected to open this year, and a centre for Prospect is in the planning and design stage, pending funding arrangements.



Sue Hylland, CEO of the Canada Games Council; Barry Barnet, Nova Scotia Minister of Health Promotion and Protection; Peter MacKay, Minister of National Defence and ACOA; Mayor Kelly and Jean-Paul Deveau, Chair of Halifax 2011 Canada Games Host Society announce funding for the Games - March 2008.



Show Your Culture –  
HRM's Cultural Plan for Everyone



Public Art - North Branch Library  
Sculpture

## Cultural Plan

In April 2006 HRM Council approved the Municipality's first Cultural Plan, a comprehensive policy and action plan to guide investment and set priorities for Culture over the next ten years. The Cultural Plan links directly to HRM's growth management, economic development and community development strategies, and it is a key pillar of healthy and sustainable growth for the region. Over the next 5 years operational priorities will be developed to support a sustainable cultural industry, cultural based regional economy, and culturally rich engaged and active citizenry.

### Arts and Community Cultural Development

- Development and implementation of Public Art Policy, public art programming
- Community Art Program Development
- Artist-in-residence program Development

### Cultural and Heritage Spaces and Places

- Major infrastructure plans for a municipal museum and a performing arts centre
- Historic Places Initiative - ensure our municipal registry is included in the Federal Historic Places Program Registry

### Cultural Industry Capacity Building

- Development of a cultural marketing and promotions plan promoting the arts community, the vitality, livability and growth of HRM's cultural industry,
- Cultural Expo

### Cultural Planning

- Development of a Municipal Twinning Policy
- Creative Communities Research

Notable achievements under the Cultural Plan include a draft Public Art Policy; a Public Art inventory, condition assessment, restoration of several pieces; murals created under the Youth Community Art Program; Implementation of the Graffiti Management Plan; new emphasis on developing cultural spaces in HRM's new community recreation facilities, community facility partnership fund criteria supports economic and cultural strategy.

More information on the Cultural Plan is available on the web at: [www.halifax.ca/culturalplan](http://www.halifax.ca/culturalplan).



Mural created under the Community Art Program.



A vibrant and unique community.



A beautiful, immensely livable place that teems with history and creativity - Hydrostone Market

## Economic Strategy

HRM is the economic hub of Atlantic Canada. The region accounts for 40 percent of Nova Scotia's GDP and one fifth of all the economic activity in Atlantic Canada. In late fall 2005, HRM released the region's first economic strategy – *“Strategies for Success”*. The strategy is an essential component in defining our future and ensuring that future is within our grasp.

The vision of HRM's Economic Strategy is to empower and enrich the lives of all our citizens. The strategy identifies ways in which HRM can grow into a city that is prosperous, dynamic, creative and globally competitive

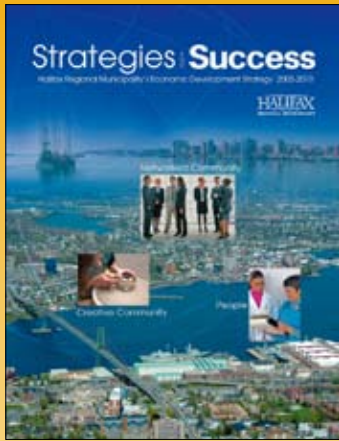
The strategy sets out 5 goals and 11 priority actions for implementation.

### Economic Strategy Goals:

- HRM's bustling job market will stop our young and ambitious from leaving and make our community a magnet for highly trained immigrants and expatriates.
- HRM's investments in social and cultural infrastructure will enhance the city's persona as one of the most vibrant and unique communities on the continent.
- HRM will possess the best business climate in Canada, one able to kick-start and grow ambitious new enterprises and attract exciting companies from anywhere on the globe.
- HRM's renown as one of the continent's great cities – a beautiful, immensely liveable place that teems with history and creativity –will draw top-drawer companies and people to our community.
- Each partner in HRM's future will work in sync to propel our economy forward in a way that improves the quality of life for every citizen.

### Economic Strategy Priority Actions:

- Work with businesses and existing ethnic, cultural communities and recent immigrants to attract and retain new immigrants.
- Develop and promote a compelling community business case for retention, expansion and attraction of DND facilities and other federal government offices.
- Support rural economic development by encouraging and providing support services to those individuals and organizations establishing or maintaining businesses in rural areas.
- Build support and work to fast track social investment projects that are already well advanced.
- Establish a Quality of Place Council to review existing brand equity in HRM and develop a multi-partner approach to marketing HRM.
- Benchmark tax, regulation, development permit approval/timing against competing cities.
- Bring infrastructure spending up to appropriate comparable standards.
- Work with Nova Scotia trade partners to inform and educate HRM business about exporting. Identify and assist trade-ready companies to enter new markets.



- Establish new and enhanced maintenance initiatives and standards with a focus on year-round, 24/7 accessibility in the downtown. Engage through a public/private approach that emphasizes individual and business responsibility and stewardship.
- Work with our partners to identify common values and vision around growing our community. Create an “alignment of strategic intent” and “rules of engagement” to implement this vision.
- Work to develop the Halifax Gateway as the East Cost logistics hub.

HRM works diligently through its administrative business planning and budget processes and in collaboration with key economic partners, including the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Halifax Partnership and all levels of government to implement the strategy goals and priorities.

More information on the Economic Strategy is available on the web at: [www.halifax.ca/economicstrategy](http://www.halifax.ca/economicstrategy).



## Immigration Action Plan

In spring 2005, Halifax Regional Council adopted a vision for immigration in our region.

*“Halifax Regional Municipality is a welcoming community where immigration is supported and encouraged. Halifax Regional Municipality will work with other levels of government and community partners to increase our collective cultural, social and economic diversity by welcoming immigrants to our community.”*

Subsequently in early fall 2005 the HRM Immigration Action Plan was developed. The Action Plan sets out a series of tasks that HRM will undertake in providing services to our citizens to create and maintain a more welcoming community. HRM’s Immigration Plan will complement the Nova Scotia Immigration Strategy, while recognizing the municipal mandate and supporting the key components of the Halifax Region Immigration Strategy.

HRM has committed to undertake a number of initiatives, in two phases, to support immigrants to HRM.

### Phase 1

Several of the initiatives under phase one have been completed, including:

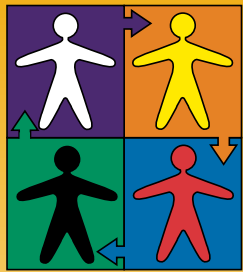
- Hosting citizenship ceremonies
- Providing welcome letters to newcomers from Mayor and Councillors
- Formalizing a partnership with Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association to provide ongoing support for SupperNova and yearly community bus tours
- Website improvements
- Developing a “Newcomers’ Guide to Halifax”
- HRM, MISA and GHP “Welcoming Communities” session at the HRM Volunteer Conference in November 2007
- Establishing a working partnership with GHP to implement aspects of the Immigration Action Plan

The remaining items for completion are:

- Create an advisory group of staff and citizens to identify the challenges and needs of diverse communities
- Utilize HRM access centres to link immigrants and existing services



Metro Transit Bus Ad



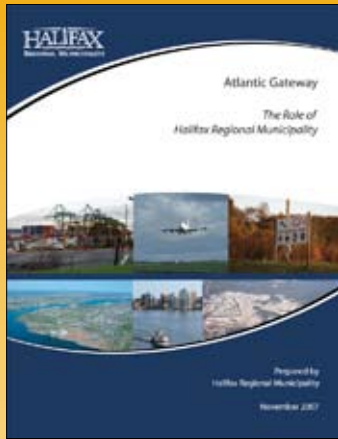
**DIVERSITY  
WORKS**

## Phase 2

- Work with community partners to provide HRM service information in multiple languages.
- Develop additional versions of the “Newcomers’ Guide to HRM” in Arabic, Mandarin, Spanish, Farsi, Russian and French.
- Increase diverse community representation on municipal committees and in policy & event planning.
- Improve staff training in communications, in particular in providing plain language correspondence.
- Explore opportunities for the three levels of government to co-locate service centres.
- Collaborate with Halifax Regional School Board to provide information to students on civics and by-laws.
- Promote culture in HRM.

A copy of the Immigration Action Plan is available on the web at:

<http://www.halifax.ca/communications/ImmigrationActionPlan.html>.



## Atlantic Gateway

The Halifax Regional Municipality acts as a multi-modal entry point for the Atlantic region. Due to its size, location and existing transportation infrastructure, HRM has untapped capacity and is well positioned to expand its role as a key hub in the Atlantic Gateway for the shipment of goods both to and from North America. The transportation sector represents a significant driver in the municipal economy and we must work with our stakeholders collaboratively to build and strengthen the sector.

HRM therefore, has a significant role to play in fostering an environment in which the transportation sector can grow and prosper and in advocating the transportation and infrastructure priorities of this region to other orders of government.

The proposed vision is Canada's Atlantic Gateway as the premiere integrated transportation network on the East Coast of North America. The primary benefits are:

- Increased container traffic through the Suez Canal to Atlantic Canada;
- Growth in cruise activity both port of call and home port;
- Improvement of transportation infrastructure throughout the region;
- Growth in air cargo, passenger travel, and tourism; and
- Increased access to foreign markets for both imports and exports.

Halifax Regional Council approved and endorsed a municipal role in developing the Atlantic Gateway. The general role of HRM, is one of strategic support in key priority areas related to the municipal mandate. The areas of primary focus, developed in collaboration with the Halifax Gateway Council, are:

- Development of the Distripark/Transload Sector – includes positioning an area within Burnside 12 as a logistics park, and coordinating business attraction and development of the area
- Development of an Air Cargo Facility – includes drafting Memorandums of Understanding with the Airport Authority and articulating infrastructure priorities
- Development of the Home Port Cruise Strategy - includes drafting Memorandums of Understanding with the Port Authority and aligning strategies to implement Gateway vision

Other HRM actions will include ongoing implementation of the Economic Strategy, Harbour Plan and Regional Plan, and supporting the Halifax Gateway Council in coordinating marketing, infrastructure investment and policy initiatives affecting port, airport, trucking, and rail involvement.

Collaboration between HRM and community partners is key to success. With that in mind, HRM is working to align its Gateway strategies with those of the province and federal government. HRM is also developing Memorandums of Understanding with stakeholders such as the Port Authority, the Airport Authority, and Nova Scotia Community College in order to facilitate work on Gateway priorities.

Details of HRM's Gateway Action Plan are available on the web at: [http://www.halifax.ca/business\\_parks/documents/AtlanticGatewayFinal5.pdf](http://www.halifax.ca/business_parks/documents/AtlanticGatewayFinal5.pdf).



## Good Neighbours Great Neighbourhoods

This HRM-wide initiative seeks to build healthy and strong communities. By drawing on old-fashioned values central to being a good neighbour, the Good Neighbours Great Neighbourhoods (GNGN) social marketing campaign aims to:

- Increase civic pride;
- Improve the local environment; and
- Encourage residents to participate in community life.

GNGN highlights the need for a personal commitment in creating welcoming, safe, vibrant neighbourhoods where we live, work and play. Focus areas include reducing graffiti, pollution and litter, and increasing voluntarism, stewardship, participation, civic pride, acceptance of newcomers, youth engagement, and awareness of how HRM/councils works.

GNGN goals include:

- Highlighting personal responsibility in creating great neighbourhoods;
- Increasing pride of place and sense of belonging;
- Increasing participation in community life;
- Raising awareness of how HRM/Council's work;
- Positioning HRM as a partner with citizens in initiatives which improve quality of life in HRM.

GNGN integrates many of the valuable programs happening within HRM under a single “umbrella” so that they provide consistency in messaging, collaborative efforts, and an integrated approach to support Council's focus areas. The initiative will also seek key external partners and provide resources for neighbourhoods to mobilize from within.

Citizens can find more information, and take the pledge to be a good neighbour, at [www.myhrm.ca](http://www.myhrm.ca).



[www.myhrm.ca](http://www.myhrm.ca)



Toolkit, May 2008

# Government Relations and Strategic Partnership Development Policy





# HRM Government Relations and Strategic Partnership Development

## ■ Background

Cooperation and partnerships with provincial and federal governments and community partners will enable HRM to better achieve community goals.

Today more than ever there is a strong linkage required and developing between municipal, provincial and federal governments. Intergovernmental and partner cooperation and relationship building is key to ensuring success at meeting citizen needs and providing effective and efficient public service.

There is only one citizen, one tax payer, and governments have a shared accountability for public service to the citizen. However, each level of government maintains a different responsibility and mandate for specific services and methods of provision. As well, nongovernmental organizations have an important role to play.

Understanding the authority and responsibility of each level of government is key to understanding how to effectively implement government relations and to developing effective intergovernmental relationships. The level of authority and jurisdiction sets the parameters under which each partner can participate. Maximizing the benefits of the different responsibility areas and coordinating the activities around each will enhance service to the public.

Municipal governments are at the closest point of intersection to the community and the citizen. In Nova Scotia, the municipal mandate, roles and responsibilities are set out in the provincial Municipal Government Act (MGA). Municipalities have no legislative or legal authority beyond the MGA. However, the growing significance of local governments in an urbanized country is slowly being recognized.

The Provincial and Federal governments are adapting to the growing significance of municipalities as is evidenced by various recent programs and initiatives. Municipalities need to capitalize on the opportunity and work together with our government (and non-government) partners to further common objectives.

There will continue to be interdependence between the three levels of government, as such; the final form of the relationship between the levels and the amount of focus on municipal interest will continue to be fluid. Much depends on the senior governments, but local governments must also make every effort to articulate their views in a respectful, consistent and assertive fashion.

Strong intergovernmental relationships provide an opportunity to develop mutually-beneficial partnerships and to shape public policy for the benefit of the citizen. Flexible and cooperative partnerships, based on trust, are required. Accountability and jurisdiction are a reality, but do not have to be a barrier to effective relationships and arrangements.



## Introduction

HRM's *Government Relations and Strategic Partnership Development Policy* is intended to advance relationship building and outcome achievement. The policy sets out guiding principles for interaction with key partners. The policy focuses on other government and non-government partners who all have a role in achieving results for the benefit of HRM's citizens. Actions are identified and forwarded based on Council direction and corporate strategies

Effective government relations requires understanding the process of how government decisions are made, being proactive, participating, educating, and building relationships with individuals who will impact the outcome.

To achieve a goal, it is important to deliver the right message, to the right person, at the right time.

HRM's *Government Relations and Strategic Partnership Development Policy* articulates the roles and responsibilities of Mayor, Council and staff in intergovernmental affairs and strategic partnership development. The outcomes are toward: relationship and partnership building, advancing key priority issues and issue resolution.

## Policy Statement

In developing government and partner relationships, HRM is committed to a series of principles that will guide all actions and activity undertaken with respect to achieving results.

In HRM, Government Relations and Strategic Partnership Development will:

- be consistent with Vision and Goals of HRM
- be consistent with corporate strategies
- support integration and facilitate communication
- foster consistent messaging throughout HRM
- understand and respect jurisdictional boundaries

In undertaking actions related to government and partner relations, HRM will:

- be open, honest, and transparent
- provide credible, reliable, factual information
- be proactive
- seek collaborative solutions and approaches
- utilize media opportunities effectively and appropriately
- agree to shared goals with partners



## ■ Outcomes

There are three key long-term outcomes of government and partner relationship development. These outcomes are maintained cross issue or initiative, and are not focused towards any one specific area. Over time, the following outcomes should be realized and maintained through ongoing commitment:

- Relationship and partnership building
- Advancement of HRM's priority issues
- Collaborative issue resolution

On a more regular basis, specific issue driven goals will be developed. These goals will be more specific and have a shortened time frame for realization. Such goals will relate more to specific actions to be carried out on an annual basis. Goals such as increased access to infrastructure funding, or legislative changes to meet HRM's needs may be articulated. Items such as these are articulated in the annual *Priority Action Areas*.

## ■ Governance

Government Relations and Strategic Partnership Development will be administered across the organization. Mayor, Council and all staff have a role to play in ensuring its success.

The focus is on matters of public policy, corporate strategy and/or Council direction. Implementation will be representative of HRM's organizational priorities and needs.

A fundamental role of Halifax Regional Council is to discuss and approve key areas of focus requiring attention. Coordinated and consistent political influence will be required to effectively achieve desired results in areas such as relationship building, new program development, accessing funding and seeking legislative change.

Political participation will focus on arising issues; on issues that have potential to impact on HRM and the citizens of the region. New items requiring action will be brought forward through Council. Emerging issues or areas with significant media and political attention may be identified for action. In such cases, staff support will be provided to initiatives as directed by Council to ensure continuity and resolution. Halifax Regional Council has ultimate authority in approving any agreements with other agencies that involves sharing the authority and resources of the organization.

Administration and support is provided through the Chief Administrative Office. Responsibility and corporate coordination is within the Chief Administrative Office. As well, strategic and corporate relations will remain with the Chief Administrative Office and Senior Staff as directed by the CAO. Relationship building and partnership development will be carried out by all staff, on an on-going basis. The principles and goals will guide all interaction with other government and community partners.



This administration role is based on two key areas of need: strategic and operational.

The strategic focus is based on the direction provided by Council, and encompasses areas of common interest, goals and objectives between HRM and the partner organizations. The strategic focus is led by the CAO.

The operational focus is based on key issues or needs from an operational or day to day functioning perspective. The operational focus is led by the business units, in conjunction with the Chief Administrative Office.

## ■ Priority Action Areas

Yearly priority action areas, for government and partnership relations are developed for Council review and approval. Areas identified will be based on Council direction, business plan priorities and CAO goals and objectives. Other specific activities will be incorporated as required for the implementation of Corporate Strategies or Plans (such as the Regional Plan, Economic Strategy or Cultural Plan).

## ■ Work Plan

A work plan will be developed and monitored yearly to assist with implementation and monitoring of Council directions. The work plan will consist of key to enable the achievement of outcomes and priority areas noted. A yearly review will be completed to comment on activity undertaken and success of implementation.

*Approved by Regional Council October 2006*

*For more information contact HRM Intergovernmental Affairs, 490-3677*

**Government Relations and Strategic  
Partnership Development Policy  
Priority Action Areas 2008-2009**



## Government Relations and Strategic Partnership Development

### ■ Priority Action Areas 2008/2009

*Following HRM's Government Relations & Strategic Partnership Development Policy, Priority Action Areas are developed and reviewed regularly based on: Council direction, Corporate Strategies or Plans, CAO goals and objectives, and business plan priorities.*

*The areas noted below are organized by strategic initiative and include steps underway to implement each initiative, from an intergovernmental perspective. The following does not prioritize actions, initiatives or requirements; rather it provides a sense of the areas that are being or need to be coordinated with other levels of government. The priority action areas are not an all-inclusive account of necessary activities. Focus will be added in different areas as required.*





Halifax Wastewater Treatment Facility, Upper Water Street



BioSolids Processing Facility, Aerotech Park, 2007



## HRM Focus: Provincial/Federal Governments

### Community Development

Community Development encompasses a range of key areas, including youth, environment, transportation, and urban planning and design. It also includes Regional Plan implementation – the plan that will direct growth and development in HRM over the next 25 years.

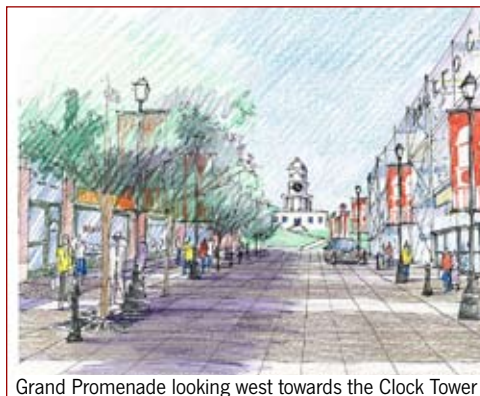
### Current Focus:

#### Environment

- Advance HRM's input re: Provincial Energy Strategy renewal
- Working towards establishment of a new provincial Climate Change Strategy
- Establish HRM as a major stakeholder in the development of the provincial water resources management strategy, which will focus on identifying, protecting and monitoring sustainable use of water resources
- Continue to liaise with the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment to seek pragmatic solutions around implementation of new federal wastewater legislation (the municipal wastewater effluent strategy)
- Increased focus on provincial Airshed Management initiative (overall collaborative planning approach to clean air), and the need for transparent reporting / information-sharing
- Work with the province to maintain the effective legislation and regulations currently in place around biosolids.

#### Urban Planning and Design

- Advance legislative changes around the HRMbyDesign downtown planning program
- Strategic Land Acquisitions between HRM and the Department of Natural Resources
- Development of an agreement for land transfer around Capital District Public Lands.



Grand Promenade looking west towards the Clock Tower

One of the 10 “Big Moves” of the Downtown Halifax Vision - #6. Great streets that support a culture of walking



Burnside transportation infrastructure completed, 2007/08



Central Library open house presentation, June 2008



## Infrastructure

HRM is currently working towards the development of a long-term infrastructure strategy for the region. This strategy will guide infrastructure investment to address asset deterioration and deficiencies through recapitalization, while balancing new capability projects required to support areas of growth.

### Current Focus:

- Continue to work with government partners to negotiate funding programs and criteria to benefit HRM (such as MRIF, Public Transit Funding, Gas Tax, CSIF, Building Canada)
- Pursue strategic opportunities for federal/provincial funding for recreation facilities and libraries (e.g., the Mainland Common recreation centre and Central library construction)
- Continue the intergovernmental working relationship around the 2011 Canada Winter Games
- Work with Federal and Provincial partners to align priorities regarding investment in capital infrastructure within the region, where feasible
- Complete a cooperative assessment and review of ownership and condition of bridges and dams in HRM
- Federal revenue sharing - through FCM, participate in revenue sharing advocacy initiatives
- Implement opportunities for joint land-use planning
- Identify and implement opportunities for energy efficiency projects
- Pursue strategic opportunities for investment in active transportation and public transit which furthers environmental sustainability objectives
- Engage and collaborate with province on the assessment of projects for P3 partnerships (e.g., trunk mobile radio services)
- Work with the province and related third parties around the development of a proposal for a new convention centre.



"How Your Municipal Tax Dollars Are Spent", 2008

## Tax Reform

In January of 2007 Regional Council established its Tax Reform Committee to review the current property tax system as one of the Council Focus Areas. A Mission Statement with seven principles and 29 objectives has been created for a possible new property tax system. The Committee has created a draft tax model for public feedback. Public consultations will be ongoing.



### Current Focus:

- Joint discussions with Canada Revenue Agency regarding the administration of a low income rebate or circuit breaker
- HRM to communicate regularly with province on municipal tax reform
- Possible legislative changes required as final tax reform recommendations are finalized.



Tax Reform public consultation meeting, 2008



Mock Emergency Exercise

## Public Safety

The umbrella of public safety includes by-law enforcement, Emergency Measures (EMO), Fire Services, Integrated Emergency Services, HRP and RCMP. HRM Fire and Police are striving to develop new partnerships and enhance existing ones through community and government participation and engagement.

### Current Focus:

#### Fire Protection

- Volunteer recruitment & retention. HRM is represented on a provincial committee established to study and look at ways to retain and recruit volunteer firefighters across the province
- Firefighter Training. The Nova Scotia Fire Service Training Committee identified a requirement for \$34 million in capital spending spread over several years to address training needs across the province. HRM will continue to work with the Committee and the Government of Nova Scotia to address the training needs in HRM and the province
- Development of a service provision agreement with HIAA that delineates responsibilities and jurisdiction of HRM and HIAA fire services.

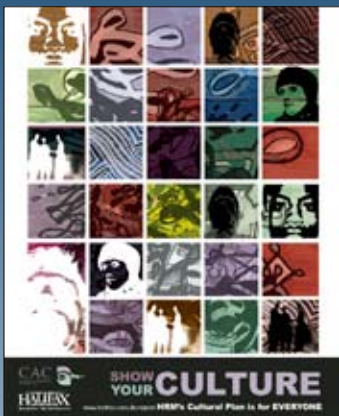
#### Policing

- Advocate to have municipalities recognized as a full partner during federal/provincial discussions regarding public safety and emergency preparedness
- Safer Streets & Communities Task Force – program expansion to include new neighbourhoods in HRM
- Continued advocacy for funding of Police Officers.



Lake Echo/Porter's Lake Fire, June 2008





"Show Your Culture, HRM's Cultural Plan for Everyone"

## Cultural Plan

The Cultural Plan is a comprehensive policy and action plan to guide investment and set priorities for Culture over the next ten years. The Cultural Plan links directly to HRM's growth management, economic development and community development strategies, and it is a key pillar of healthy and sustainable growth for the region.

### Current Focus:

- Historic Places Initiative - ensure our municipal registry of heritage buildings is included in the Federal Historic Places Program Registry, and work to demonstrate need for the federal registry to be maintained and updated beyond the funding expiration of 2011
- Work with provincial and federal government in developing HRM's new Cultural Expo initiative
- Advocate for Halifax to receive a 2010 Cultural Capital of Canada designation.



Registered heritage property, North Street, Halifax



A vibrant and unique community -  
Multi-Cultural Festival



Halifax Waterfront Boardwalk



Hakodate twin-city anniversary  
celebrations

## Economic Strategy

HRM's Economic Strategy identifies ways in which the city can attract and retain immigrants and expatriates; create a competitive business environment; increase exports; benchmark tax, regulation and development approvals and timing; and work with partners to identify common values and vision.

HRM works diligently in collaboration with all levels of government, as well as with key economic partners such as the Greater Halifax Partnership and the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, to implement the strategy goals and priorities.

### Current Focus:

- Participation on Economic Strategy Advisory Committee for strategy oversight
- Continued work with government and community partners to implement the actions identified in the Economic Strategy
- Work with federal and provincial partners to ensure appropriate funding for regional economic development agency
- Develop a service agreement with Destination Halifax
- Work with partners to identify major gaps in skills and training in HRM's labour market and focus on ways in which to address the shortfall and knowledge gap.





Intergovernmental working relationship regarding new entrepreneur immigration program



## Immigration Action Plan

The Action Plan sets out a series of tasks that HRM will undertake in providing services to our citizens to create and maintain a more welcoming community. HRM's Immigration Plan will complement provincial immigration initiatives, while recognizing the municipal mandate and supporting the key components of the Halifax Region Immigration Strategy.

### Current Focus:

- Develop an intergovernmental working relationship with the province regarding its new entrepreneur immigration stream and the Provincial Nominee Program
- Identify linkages between the federal, provincial and municipal programs and explore ways to better connect with arriving immigrants to inform them of community programs and services
- Work with government partners, businesses, existing ethnic and cultural communities and recent immigrants to attract and retain newcomers
- Collaborate with Greater Halifax Partnership to develop a "Welcoming Communities" marketing campaign.



Metro Transit Bus Ad



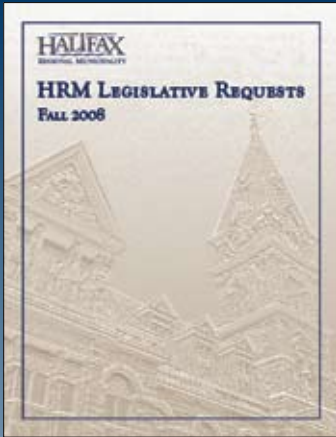
## Atlantic Gateway

HRM is well positioned to expand its role as a key hub in the Atlantic Gateway for the shipment of goods both to and from North America. The transportation sector represents a significant driver in the municipal economy and we must work with our stakeholders collaboratively to build and strengthen the sector. The proposed vision is Canada's Atlantic Gateway as the premiere integrated transportation network on the East Coast of North America. The general role of HRM is one of strategic support in key priority areas related to the municipal mandate.

### Current Focus:

- Alignment of Gateway partners, including municipal, provincial and federal, to ensure agreement on key priorities
- Advancement of Gateway concept to benefit of region
- Working with partners to develop a long range land use plan for Halifax Harbour
- Maximize opportunities to leverage infrastructure funding for Gateway-related initiatives
- Engagement with Halifax Port Authority and Halifax Robert L. Stanfield International Airport Authority, particularly on land needs and acquisitions
- Marketing and planning for Burnside Phase 12 and 13 as the Atlantic Gateway Logistics Park.





## HRM Charter

HRM is the economic and population hub of Nova Scotia. Its population and commercial and residential developments continue to grow each year. In order to manage local issues effectively, HRM's evolution calls for innovative policy design, regulatory flexibility and the ability to secure legislative amendments in a timely manner.

All municipalities in Nova Scotia are governed by the Municipal Government Act. Under the MGA, municipal powers are limited in scope and require frequent administrative amendments. For a city of HRM's size, the need to wait for these amendments affects Regional Council's ability to respond to local issues. A Charter will provide HRM with the flexibility to deal with municipal issues in an innovative and timely manner, and it will recognize the unique needs and relative scope of HRM.

### Current Focus:

- HRM continues to advocate for the implementation of a Charter for the Halifax Regional Municipality.



## Strong Neighbourhoods

Originally a proposed tripartite agreement between federal, provincial and municipal governments as identified by the Gas Tax Agreement, HRM has proposed a renewed focus on shared priority areas.

### Current Focus:

- Work towards a bilateral/trilateral agreement around the Strong Neighbourhoods theme, such as youth, housing and crime prevention
- Increased emphasis on HRM's designation as one of Canada's Safe Communities, an initiative that has private and public sectors working to promote a culture of safety and improve the health and safety of workers and people in the community. HRM has an injury and crime reduction strategy that focuses on key areas such as fall prevention, reducing motor vehicle injuries and self-inflicted injuries.



Metro University Presidents Consortium



Dan English, CAO; Chris Power, Capital District Health Authority

## ■ HRM Focus: Strategic Partnerships

### Memorandums of Understanding with Community Partners

Areas of strategic partnership focus, for the current year, will include:

- Continued implementation of MOU with Metro University Presidents Consortium with priority focus on four areas:
  - Research-sharing
  - Volunteer opportunities
  - Funding Application support
  - Youth engagement
  - Public Safety
- Implementation of MOU with Capital District Health Authority with priority focus in three areas:
  - Integration of project-specific communications initiatives
  - Partnerships around wellness centres in new recreation facilities
  - Joint work and information-sharing around employee wellness initiatives
- Implementation of MOU with Halifax Robert L. Stanfield International Airport Authority
- Finalization of an MOU with Nova Scotia Community College
- Development of MOUs with Halifax Port Authority, Halifax Regional School Board, and Department of National Defence.



## Good Neighbours Great Neighbourhoods

HRM has commenced a social marketing campaign that aims to increase civic pride; improve the local environment; and encourage residents to participate in community life. Focus areas include reducing graffiti, pollution and litter, and increasing voluntarism, stewardship, participation, civic pride, acceptance of newcomers, youth engagement, and awareness of HRM/councils works. The initiative will seek key external partners and provide resources for neighbourhoods to mobilize from within.



Youth engagement -  
[www.hrmyouth.ca](http://www.hrmyouth.ca)



Metro Transit bus board



[www.myhrm.ca](http://www.myhrm.ca)



Reducing graffiti - community artists paint murals along the Harbour Front Trail, Downtown Dartmouth



## ■ Conclusion

As a municipal government, it is our responsibility to maintain and expand the collection of municipal services and infrastructure within our boundaries. However, we also have broader responsibilities towards the environment, the economy and the nation, as a whole. We have made considerable progress towards achieving many of our goals. Along with our Federal and Provincial partners, we hope to continue to move forward and look for new tools and funding where our issues converge, such as in sustainable planning, environmental management, economic growth, culture and green infrastructure.

*For more information, contact HRM Intergovernmental Affairs, 902-490-3677  
[www.halifax.ca/IntergovernmentalAffairs/index.html](http://www.halifax.ca/IntergovernmentalAffairs/index.html).*



CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE