



# Canada

## Greater Halifax Partnership

### Framework and setting

- Geographic scale** The Greater Halifax Partnership is the economic growth organisation for Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. The population of Halifax is 380,000 people and the area is over 5,900 km<sup>2</sup>.
- Policy framework** The Greater Halifax Partnership is a public-private model that receives funding from all three levels of government (municipal, provincial and federal) and over 135 private-sector investors. Its mandate is to help keep and grow businesses in Halifax, while attracting new investment to the area. The organisation is responsible for economic growth in Halifax and also partners with the Provincial and Federal Governments on regional economic development initiatives.

### Partnerships at work

- Rationale** Ten years ago, Halifax was in a serious state of decline. In 1996, the economic outlook was bleak. While most of North America was coming out of economic downturn, Halifax was still in recession. Key industries were in a decline and there were deep government budget cuts. In total, over 8,000 public sector jobs were eliminated from the system, which included US\$ 300,000,000 in annual payroll. The city lost jobs and people, and lost our pride and our confidence. Separate economic development organisations, Business and Government, did not trust each other and in fact, competed against each other. A few leaders stepped forward and proposed a public-private model, led by the private sector, where business and government would share the responsibility, accountability and cost of economic development for Halifax.
- Objectives** The main objectives of the Partnership is to grow the Halifax Economy by helping to keep and grow existing business and attracting new investment to the area. Its goals are:
- \_ Investment: attract new investment to and encourage expansions of existing business;
  - \_ Employment: increase the number of high-quality jobs;
  - \_ Business Confidence: maintain and grow business confidence;
  - \_ Community Capacity: improve capacity to respond to growth opportunities;
  - \_ Organisational Capacity: create a dynamic and positive work environment and increase the business community's involvement and prosperity of Halifax; and
  - \_ Consulting: work with other communities and regions to implement best practices approach to economic development.
- Functions** With a diverse makeup of services and initiatives, the Partnership is committed to strengthening local, regional and international business relationships and advance Greater Halifax's economy. Activities include business retention & expansion; immigration, trade development, business recruitment, business research and building confidence.
- Policy areas** Economic development, business climate improvement
- Policy tools/ Instruments** Through the SmartBusiness Retention and Expansion initiative, the Partnership uses a comprehensive survey tool to understand business needs and areas of business climate that need improvement.
- Timeframe** The Partnership was formed in 1996.
- Partners** Local, provincial and federal governments as well as over 135 private-sector investors.
- Contracts** The Greater Halifax Partnership has service agreements with major funding organisations.
- Legal status** A private organisation, incorporated under the societies act in the Province of Nova Scotia.
- Sources of Financing** Local, provincial and federal governments as well as over 135 private-sector investors.

- Results** Since 1996:
- \_ Creation of 42,900 jobs;
  - \_ Decrease in unemployment from 8.8% to 4.9%;
  - \_ US\$1.99 billion growth in retail sales;
  - \_ 47% growth in the value of commercial property;
  - \_ 82% growth in the value of residential property; and
  - \_ 29,047 new housing starts.

## Partnerships' highlight

**Programme/Project** SmartBusiness Retention and Expansion

**Timeframe** June 2004 – present

**Objectives** The Partnership's SmartBusiness retention and expansion initiative is based upon research that indicates that 8 of 10 new jobs are created by companies already present in our local economy. The initiative is designed to identify and remove growth barriers for business.

**Activities** SmartBusiness Account Executives have been out in the community and have visited over 1,100 companies to date. Account Executives have been successful in identifying and resolving issues. Issues are directed to the Action Team, a group representing 25 different organisations, for resolution. In addition to individual issue resolution, SmartBusiness's data is entered into a robust database, giving the Partnership the most accurate compilation of common business issues, allowing the Partnership to identify and work towards resolution.

- Results**
- \_ SmartBusiness Results: 1,115 consultations; 707 generated referrals (558 closed referrals); 1,137 jobs created; 1,406 jobs retained;
  - \_ Business Recruitment Success: Research In Motion - RIM (1,200 jobs over the next 5 five years); Consolidated Fastrate Inc (255 jobs); Olympia Capital (150 new jobs over 5 five years); Butterfield Fund Services (400 jobs over 7 seven years); Citco Fund Services (350 jobs over 7 seven years); Marsh (150 jobs over 6 six years);
  - \_ Business Retention Success: Manulife Financial, Medmira, Air Canada Jazz;
  - \_ Marketing & Communications Successes: Paid Publication Advertising Campaign, Award from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) for the Halifax Region Immigration Strategy Advertising Campaign;
  - \_ 2006 Economic Developers Association of Canada Economic Development Achievement of the Year Award for SmartBusiness Initiative.

## Contacts **Partnership co-ordination at national / sub-regional level**

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