

Stephen Dempsey  
President and CEO, Greater Halifax Partnership  
Annual General Meeting Remarks  
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## **Check Against Delivery**

- My name is Stephen Dempsey and I am the President and CEO of the Greater Halifax Partnership.
- I am delighted to speak to you today about performance – the strong performance of the Greater Halifax economy and the performance of the Greater Halifax Partnership.
- The Partnership is the economic growth organization for Greater Halifax.
- It was founded in 1996 by the Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce and our City on the principle that the private and public sectors both play critical roles in economic growth and that increasing coordination and collaboration between them would improve the performance of our economy.
- From its inception, the Partnership has focused its energies in three primary areas:
  - Building the Smart City brand
  - Building investment and growth
  - Building a successful organization
- Today, I will tell you about the initiatives we have undertaken in 2003 in each of these areas.
- First, let's talk about building the smart city brand.
- We created the Smart City brand because we feel it best reflects the essence of Greater Halifax.
- And we have firmly established that business brand for Greater Halifax locally and beyond - we ARE Canada's Smart City.
- Our Smart Growth campaign takes our Smart City branding to new heights.
- It is designed to build confidence.
- Our research reveals that a confident business community invests, draws talented people and builds international relationships.

- We have been aggressively promoting our brand.
- Last year we generated over 79 MILLION media impressions for our brand in the local, regional, national and international markets. It represents an over 225% increase from what we accomplished in 2002.
- This increase was only possible because of the generous support of our media investors that contribute space for our campaign.
- Is it working? Are we building confidence in Greater Halifax?
- Here are some of the facts:
  - Greater Halifax ranked among the highest of cities in Canada for business confidence in a Canadian Federation of Independent Business survey this past year.
  - A recent survey by Nova Scotia Business Inc, conducted by Corporate Research Associates showed that 92% of business leaders in Nova Scotia are optimistic about the performance of the economy as they look ahead three years.
  - As recently as this month, a Manpower survey concluded that Greater Halifax businesses are the most optimistic in the country when it comes to hiring new employees.
- We're also being noticed on the national stage.
  - Earlier this year, CBC News conducted a Top Ten Cities in Canada poll. Halifax placed fourth in the country behind Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto and ahead of cities like Calgary and Ottawa.
  - The 2003 Health Canada study "Where to Work in Canada" revealed that Atlantic Canadian employees demonstrate the best work ethic, attitude and job satisfaction in the country.
- Quite a list of accomplishments for a city that continues to punch above its weight class!
- The business brand for Greater Halifax is strong, it's building confidence at home and attracting attention from away.
- Our next marketing campaign is now in development and is building on the confidence message we deliver in our current Smart Growth campaign.
- Stay tuned, we're planning to launch later this spring.

- Now I'd like to talk about building investment and growth
- We build investment and growth in Greater Halifax in two ways.
- One way is by building investment and growth from within, the other is by attracting investment from away.
- How are we doing? Well, for example in Greater Halifax, there has been a 20% year-over-year growth in the value of building permits issued to 570 million dollars and a 37% year-over-year growth in non-residential construction investment to 138 million dollars. That represents significant investment driving the growth of our economy.
- One strategy we use to build this investment and growth is by creating and nurturing partnerships.
- In addition to working with our private sector investor companies, we also partner with organizations like:
- The Halifax Regional Development Agency, The Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Industry Canada, Nova Scotia Business Inc, the Nova Scotia Office of Economic Development, the Black Business Initiative, Destination Halifax, the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, just to name a few.
- Now I will give you four examples of what we do with some of these organizations to build growth from within.
  - Working with ACOA on research projects like the ones we are advancing around the Urban Growth Agenda for our region – we are getting OUR key messages out at the national level.
  - In 2003 we worked with MISA and other community partners to present the first Nova Scotia Immigration Partnership Conference. We are now working with MISA, HRM, the Chamber and other agencies to develop an immigration strategy for Greater Halifax.

- This week we signed a MOU with BBI. This will strengthen an already close working relationship with an important segment of our business community.
- Which leads me to our most significant initiative, our business retention and expansion program that involves many different stakeholder groups. Studies have shown that 80% of our growth will come “from within” - from companies that are already here.
- Our Business Retention and Expansion initiative is a multi-stakeholder program that will utilize our senior investors to meet with over one thousand Greater Halifax businesses to assist them in identifying and addressing barriers to growth.
- And to increase visibility for our local Business Retention and Expansion program, we are hosting an international Business Retention and Expansion conference in Greater Halifax this May.
- Now, how do we drive investment and growth from away? Again, it’s by creating and nurturing partnerships.
  - Under the leadership of NSBI the Partnership has worked with many companies and corporate influencers to interest them in Greater Halifax as a business location. In cooperation with NSBI, over 2,000 new jobs were created in Greater Halifax by six companies during the past year.
  - The Greater Washington Initiative. We have a long-standing agreement with GWI. Essentially it’s like having an office in Washington. Many of our local companies have pursued opportunities in Washington and vice versa, taking advantage of that partnership.
  - It is through these efforts that we are able to put on seminars like “doing business with the US government” which creates new business opportunities for our local companies. This seminar, by the way, only went to Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Ottawa and Greater Halifax.

- Also the General Services Agency, representing the biggest buyer in the world, the US Government, is coming to town next month, again, only because of our partnership with GWI.
- The Canadian-American Business Council recently recognized this collaboration with Greater Washington as one of the most successful of its kind in North America.
- The World Energy Cities Partnership – Mayor Peter Kelly was elected President this year. We are working with other member cities to drive economic growth. A team is currently in Aberdeen working on an MOU that will lead to opportunities for Greater Halifax companies to expand their business networks.
- Closer to home, we have been working with Enterprise Greater Moncton to create the Halifax Moncton Growth Corridor.
- Greater Halifax is the natural leader in the region. As the largest city, it must take a leadership role in driving economic growth for the Atlantic Provinces. We have been driving this regional leadership role through two projects.
- Both are in the early stages, but have achieved success in understanding opportunities, changing attitudes, stimulating cooperation, breaking down long-standing barriers and developing a common growth agenda.
- This makes us all a larger target for investment attraction and business growth.
- It also builds on the leadership work our Mayor has done with the Atlantic Mayors Congress.
- Finally, I'd like to briefly talk about building a successful organization
- We run the Partnership like a business. We have a balanced scorecard to track our organizational success. I'm pleased to report that we achieved our objectives and hit 19 of 21 targets for 2003.
- 2003 was also a record year for revenue, which grew by 25% overall. Within that:  
Project revenue grew by 60%  
Private investment revenue grew by 47%

- All of this revenue is re-invested back into our community to drive economic growth.
- Based on a budget of 3.9 million dollars for this year, HRMs share of the cost for economic development is less than 25 cents for every dollar invested in economic growth. That's the performance you get from partnership.
- Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the strong and dedicated contributions of the Partnership team. Without their hard work, we would not have been successful in achieving our objectives.
- I would also like to thank our founding partners, HRM and the Chamber of Commerce for their vision and continued strong support.
- We would not have been successful without the support of our investors. HRM, our single largest investor, the Provincial and Federal governments and of course our private sector companies – companies that continue to demonstrate their support of the Partnership on behalf of all businesses in Greater Halifax.
- We attracted 15 new private sector investors last year. We now have over 130 public and private investors – all supporting the economic growth of our community.
- I want to personally thank Don Mills for the tremendous contribution he has made to the Partnership and to me. As President of the Metropolitan Halifax Chamber of Commerce seven years ago, Don was instrumental in the formation of the Partnership. He has been an extremely active, supportive and visionary leader in his term as Chair and a tremendous mentor for me. Please join me in thanking Don for his contribution (lead applause).
- Second, Don noted that the success we have had in Greater Halifax over the past seven years is the consequence of efforts made by many private and public organizations. I want to strongly add my voice to reinforce this fact – it is only through a combined effort that we have achieved success.
- Today, I have talked about our performance – the performance of our Greater Halifax economy in 2003 and the contribution that the Partnership has made towards that performance.
- We believe that the Partnership plays a unique and critical role in the economic growth of our community and we recognize that our contribution is always as a partner working with others toward that same goal.

- With the strength of the organizations represented in this room and the opportunities that are on the horizon, it's not hard to imagine even stronger results for 2004.
- Thank you.