

# Introduction to Halifax

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) is Nova Scotia's largest and most diverse municipality. Approximately 44 per cent of the province's population resides within HRM's boundaries (Statistics Canada, 2014). HRM has significant suburban and rural content, in addition to a large urban mix.

The land area of the municipality – equal to 5,577 square kilometers (2,224 square miles) or slightly larger than the province of Prince Edward Island – is home to 414,400 residents (2014) living in nearly 200 communities.

European settlement first occurred in the region with the founding of Halifax by the British in 1749. Nine years later in 1758, an election for Council members was held and Halifax became a forerunner in the later emergence of democratically elected governments in North America. Events of historical significance have greatly influenced the development of the Region. From 1928 until 1971, over a million immigrants arrived in Canada through the Port of Halifax's Pier 21. Many of these immigrants settled in the area, enriching our social and cultural environment. Today, HRM is a region of diverse cultures; deeply rooted in history and tradition.

HRM is a first class example of urban, suburban and rural living at its finest, including the historic downtown areas on both sides of the world's second largest natural harbour; a coastal region encompassing more than 400 kilometers of shoreline; the fertile farming land in the Musquodoboit Valley, and the suburban communities of Sackville and Cole Harbour.

The Halifax Regional Municipality is committed to supporting the development and growth of business within the Region. It has one of the country's best educated workforces. Through organizations such as the Greater Halifax Partnership, HRM has experienced steady economic growth and is recognized as a great location to do business. HRM is emerging as a leader in the future of business prosperity and the award of the ships contract should serve to accelerate that prosperity.

<b>HRM Statistics (2014)</b>	
Population:	414,400
Population growth:	1.1 %
Dwelling unit growth:	1.3 %
Inflation (CPI increase):	1.8 %
Median Family Income (2011)	\$78,700
Avg. Residential Assessment, Single Family Home (2015)	\$223,600
GDP (nominal)	\$22.0 Billion
Taxable Assessment Base (2015)	\$42.3 Billion

## **The Local Economy**

Halifax has a diverse economy; the largest sectors in Halifax include trade (36,400 jobs), health care and social assistance (31,800 jobs), professional, scientific and technical services (19,000 jobs) educational services (17,400 jobs) and public administration (15,800 jobs.) Employment in the Halifax region averaged 223,300 jobs during 2014.

Over the past five years, despite a global economic slowdown, more than 8,700 new jobs were created in Halifax and 13,000 new homes were built. This past year, the total value of building permits in Halifax was \$660 million, down from the high-water mark of 2012. However, 2014 witnessed record activity on major projects – as identified by the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC) – with spending in Halifax of almost \$1.5 billion. The first (mostly) full year of production at Deep Panuke provided a solid boost to economic growth – 2.6% in 2014 – 7th among the country’s 33 largest metropolitan areas. Looking ahead to 2015, the first cutting of steel at the Irving Shipyard in September is contributing to a Conference Board forecast of even stronger GDP growth (3.0%) for the coming year.

## **The Municipal Government**

The municipality is governed by a Council/Chief Administrative Officer form of government, which includes one Councillor for each District and a Mayor elected-at-large. In 2012 the number of electoral districts was reduced from 23 to the current 16. It is the responsibility of the Chief Administrative Officer to provide advice to Council and carry out its policies and programs, as well as oversee operations and its over 4,000 full and part-time employees.

The services provided by Halifax are varied and extensive, and include:

- Public Transit
- Police Service
- Fire and Emergency Services
- Streets and Roads and Sidewalks
- Recreation and Cultural Programs
- Libraries
- Community Planning
- Economic Development
- Regulatory and Compliance Services
- Environmental Stewardship
- Environmental Services (water, waste water and storm water management services are provided by the Halifax Regional Water Commission)

HRM operates on a 12 month fiscal cycle, from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. Under provincial law it is required to prepare an operating budget for ongoing items such as salaries, wages and other recurring costs, and a capital budget, for its fixed assets. HRM’s operating budget is fully balanced. Its capital budget is financed through a mixture of debt, cost sharing, reserve withdrawals and transfers from the operating budget. The latter is known as capital from operating or “pay as you go”.

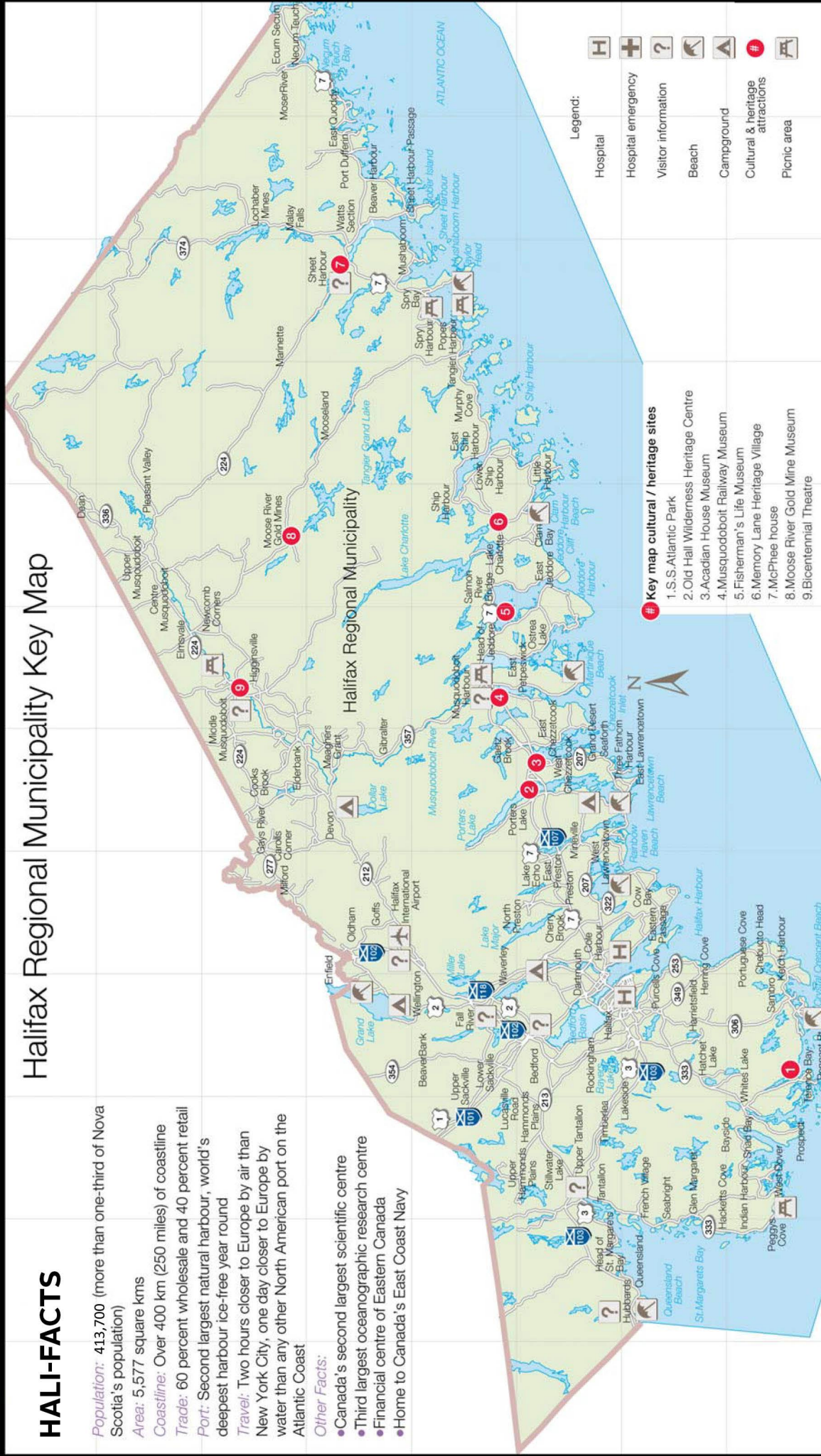
# HALI-FACTS

**Population:** 413,700 (more than one-third of Nova Scotia's population)  
**Area:** 5,577 square kms  
**Coastline:** Over 400 km (250 miles) of coastline  
**Trade:** 60 percent wholesale and 40 percent retail  
**Port:** Second largest natural harbour, world's deepest harbour ice-free year round  
**Travel:** Two hours closer to Europe by air than New York City, one day closer to Europe by water than any other North American port on the Atlantic Coast

## Other Facts:

- Canada's second largest scientific centre
- Third largest oceanographic research centre
- Financial centre of Eastern Canada
- Home to Canada's East Coast Navy

# Halifax Regional Municipality Key Map



- Legend:**
- Hospital
  - Hospital emergency
  - Visitor information
  - Beach
  - Campground
  - Cultural & heritage attractions
  - Picnic area

- Key map cultural / heritage sites**
1. S.S. Atlantic Park
  2. Old Hall Wilderness Heritage Centre
  3. Acadian House Museum
  4. Musquodoboit Railway Museum
  5. Fisherman's Life Museum
  6. Memory Lane Heritage Village
  7. McPhee house
  8. Moose River Gold Mine Museum
  9. Bicentennial Theatre