Transforming Halifax
Connecting Immigrants with Planning Policy and Urban Design

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Cities & Environment Unit

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Agenda

- Introduction

- Context

- Transforming Halifax:

  Connecting Immigrants with Planning Policy and Urban Design

- Discussion

Cities & Environment Unit

Our work focuses on:

- Creating community plans

- Generating new ideas, approaches and tools for community design

- Inspiring communities to become great places to live

Local & Provincial Policy

Nova Scotia's Immigration Strategy (2005)

- 3,600 annual immigrant arrivals within four years of strategy implementation

- Increase retention from 40% to 70% (for 2006-2011 census period)

Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)

Immigration Action Plan (2007)

- Improve communication with immigrants living in HRM

- Reconsider organizational structures

Local & Provincial Policy

HRM Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (2006)

- Immigration as an important source of economic and cultural development
- Calls for policy development on attraction, retention and integration

HRM by Design (2009)

- Downtown Halifax Urban Design Plan
- Attract more people to live and work downtown

Local & Provincial Policy

HRM Community Engagement Strategy (2008)

- 10 Community Engagement Principles

- Continuum of Community Engagement:

  - Information Sharing

  - Consultation

  - Active Participation

Greater Halifax Partnership (2005)

- Business Case & Strategic Action Plan

  - Leadership and Infrastructure

  - Integration and Retention

  - Attraction

Learn how hiring an immigrant can help your business.

ImmigrationWorksInHalifax.ca

GreaterHalifax PARTNERSHIP   PARTNERS: CONVERGYS   RBC

Research Question

How might immigrants be engaged in planning processes in HRM, and what impacts might immigrant involvement have on Halifax's neighbourhoods?

Transforming Halifax

- Objectives

- Method

- Products

- Preliminary Findings

- Recommendations

Objectives

- Understand how immigrants have transformed cities

- Engage immigrants in a learning exchange activity

- Discover how immigrants would transform the city to create a more welcoming community

Method

Phase 1: Literature Review & Case Studies

• Review literature   (completed)
• Compile lessons learned and best practices   (completed)

Phase 2: Engaging Immigrants in the Planning Process

• Develop Learning Exchange engagement model   (ongoing)
• Host Learning Exchanges with 8 focus groups   (ongoing)

Phase 3: Designing City Spaces

• Engage focus groups in community design process   (next step)

Learning Exchanges (Phase 2)

- Bring together immigrants to discuss their experiences living in HRM

- Provide information to immigrants about planning processes in Halifax and how they can help shape urban design and planning policy

Learning Exchanges: Format

Session 1:

- Present overview of planning

- Draw memory maps (discuss important services and places)

- Discuss expectations and realities (explore neighbourhood likes and dislikes)

Learning Exchanges: Format

Session 2:

- Present examples of engagement methods

- Activity:

  - Share experiences participating in planning processes (country of origin or in Canada)

  - Preferred methods of engagement

  - Explore barriers and bridges to participation

Products

- Summary of case studies, best practices and lessons learned

- Immigrant Engagement Manual
  (designed for HRM staff)

- Design guidelines generated from design work with focus groups

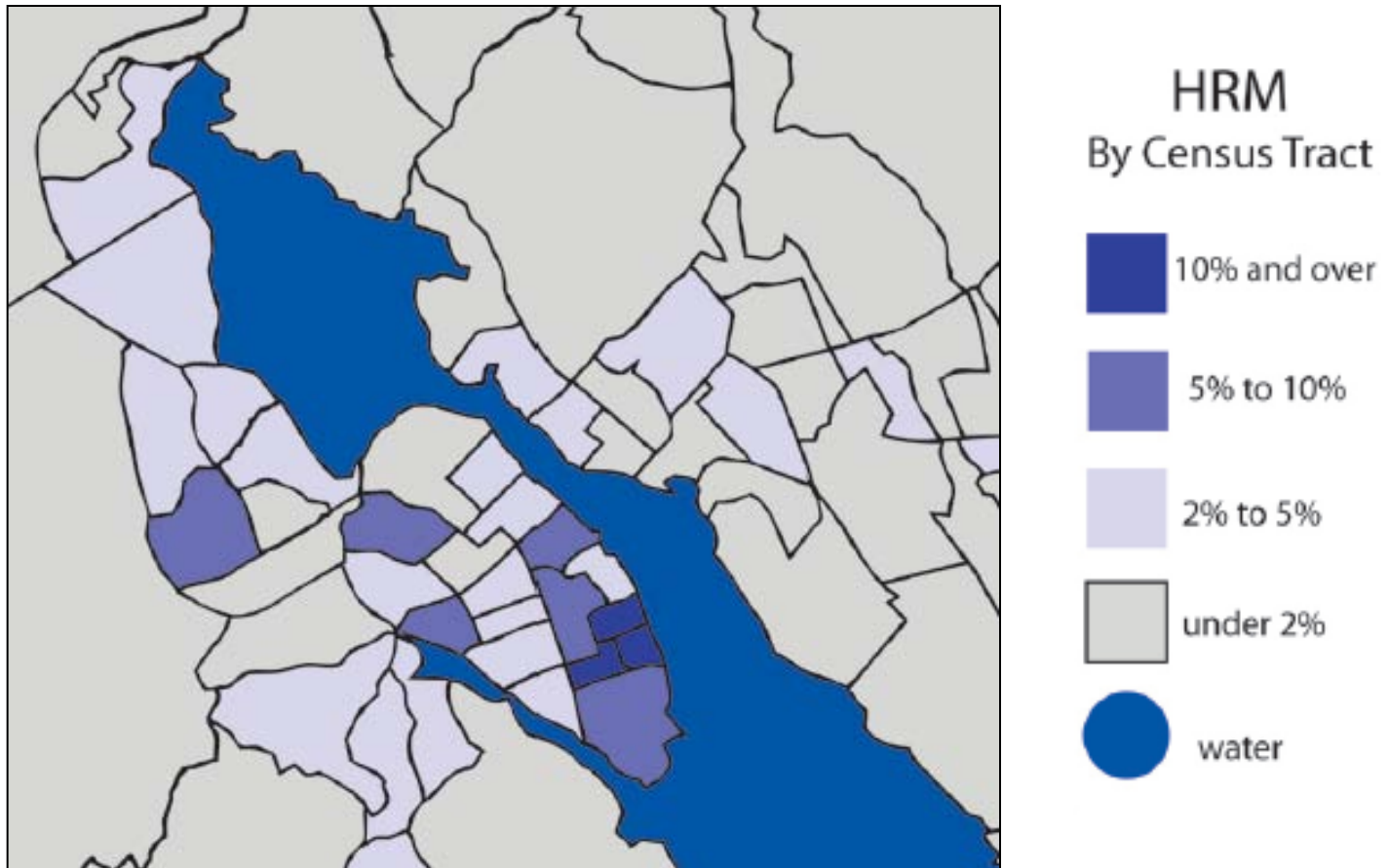- Exhibition in collaboration with Pier 21 immigration museum

Geography of Immigration in HRM

Demographics & Distribution

• No large groupings evident at the census tract level

• Dissemination areas are more telling

Geography of Immigration in HRM

Percentage of population who are non Canadian Citizens

HRM
By Census Tract

10% and over

5% to 10%

2% to 5%

under 2%

water

Geography of Immigration in HRM

Top 3 Immigrant Source Countries in HRM: USA

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Geography of Immigration in HRM

Top 3 Immigrant Source Countries in HRM: United Kingdom

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Geography of Immigration in HRM

Top 3 Immigrant Source Countries in HRM: China

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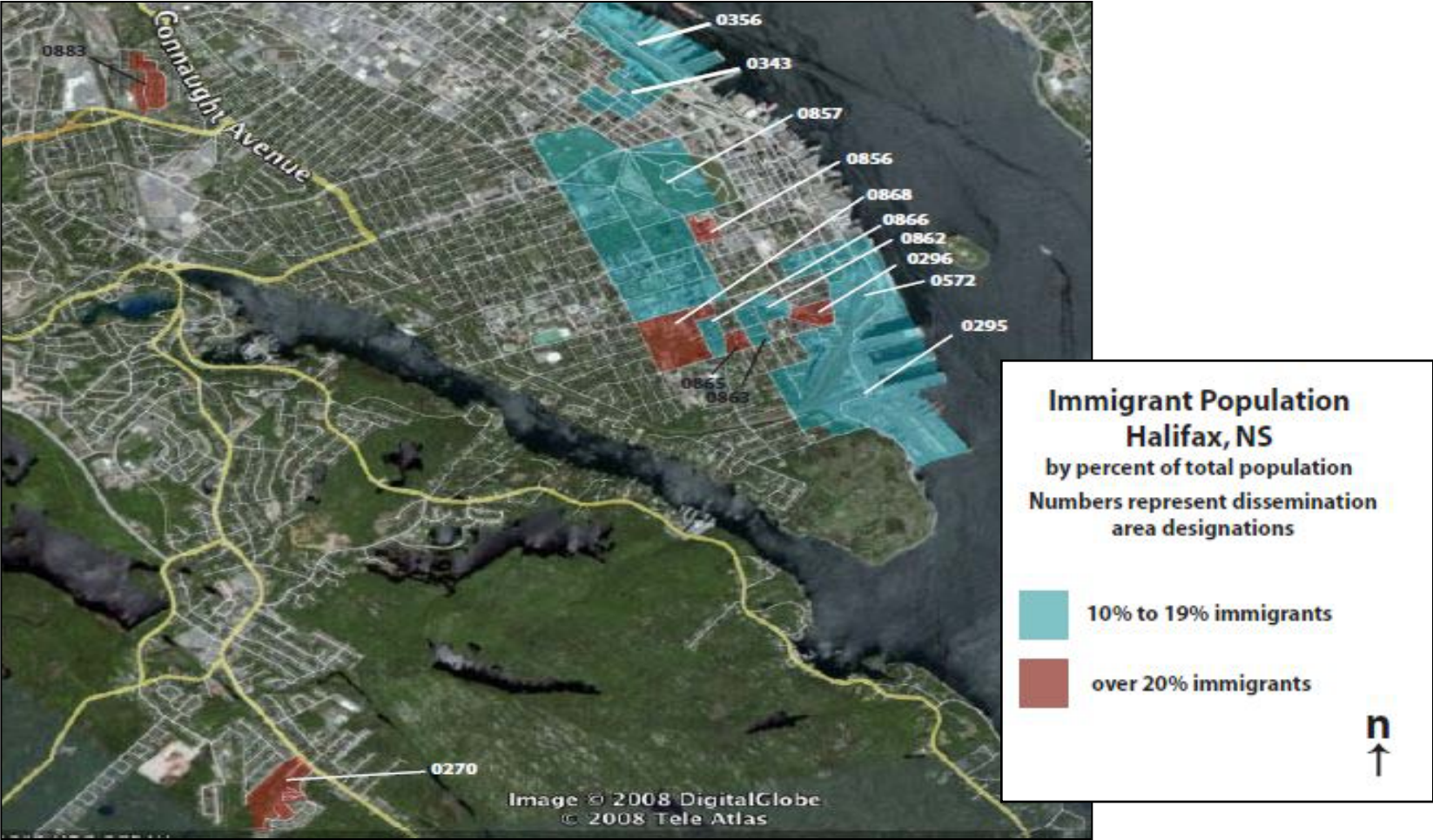
Geography of Immigration in HRM

Immigrant Population by Dissemination Area

Neighborhoods for Learning Exchanges

Legend:
- Public Library (yellow)
- Community Centre (blue)
- MISA / YMCA (white)
- School (purple)

Bedford
Total: 5,288
Immigrants: 785 (14.8 %)

The North End
Total: 5,762
Immigrants: 430 (7.5 %)

Clayton Park
Total: 6,258
Immigrants: 920 (14,7 %)

Dartmouth
Total: 4,898
Immigrants: 375 (7.6 %)

Fairview
Total: 5,360
Immigrants: 430 (8 %)

Downtown Halifax
Total: 6,280
Immigrants: 795 (12.6 %)

Spryfield
Total: 4,023
Immigrants: 465 (11.5 %)
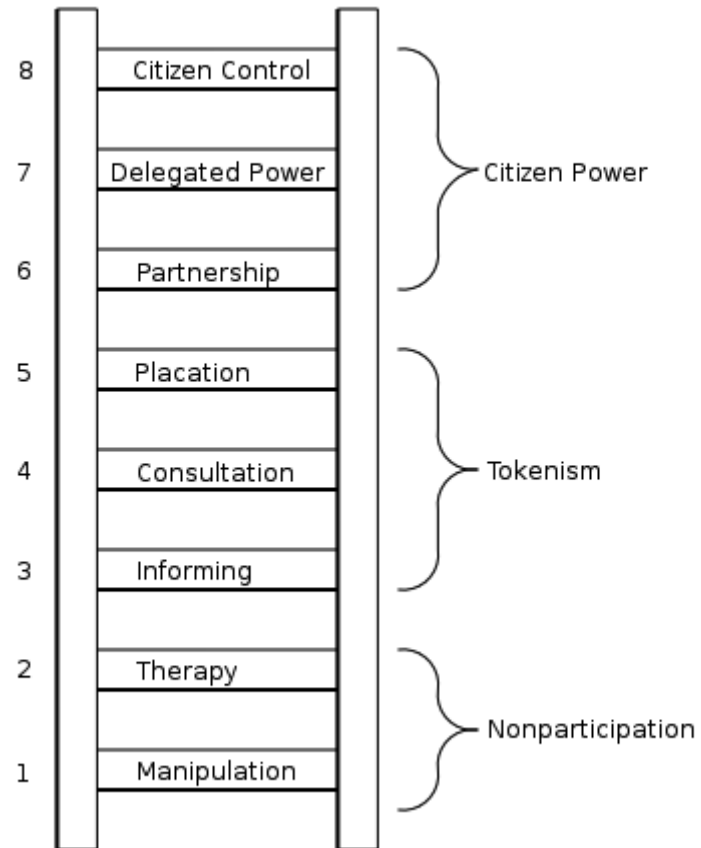
The South End
Total: 2,637
Immigrants: 440 (16.7 %)

Continuum of Community Engagement

HRM's Commitment

Active Participation

Consulting

Informing

8	Citizen Control	
7	Delegated Power	Citizen Power
6	Partnership	
5	Placation	
4	Consultation	Tokenism
3	Informing	
2	Therapy	
1	Manipulation	Nonparticipation

(Ladder of Citizen Participation adapted from Arnstein, 1969)

Bridges and Barriers

General Challenges

- Language barriers

- Lack of access to social networks

- Lack of access to knowledge

- Lack of understanding and tolerance of immigrant issues

- Lack of confidence that immigrants will be listened to

- Those with lower incomes and lower education levels are often not represented

- Many immigrants may be less concerned with their immediate neighbourhood

Bridges and Barriers

Cultural Challenges

- Citizen activism is different in different cultures

- Immigrant perceptions of and faith in government authorities may be different than those of Canadian-born citizens

- Cultural practices of confronting authorities and peers in public may differ from typical Canadian practice

Bridges and Barriers
Key Lessons

- Overcome language barriers

- Build relationships

- Use a culturally effective outreach strategy

- Choose time & locations carefully

- Make process & materials appropriate for immigrants

- Begin with immigrant concerns and priorities

- Build leadership capacity of newcomers

- Think in the long term

Preliminary Recommendations

Objectives

- Develop partnerships between the city and organizations that immigrants trust

- Go to those with whom you want engage

- Ensure dates and times do not conflict with religious cultural holidays

- Adjust notification process to include newcomers

- Adjust the style and format of activities to overcome language barriers

Preliminary Recommendations

Objectives

- Know who lives in the community, where they are from and what languages they speak

- Ensure staff is culturally diverse and multi-lingual

- Use leaders who understand cultural norms to communicate

Preliminary Findings

What makes a welcoming community?

- Access to the city
    - Recreation and public spaces
    - Transportation
    - Amenities and services
    - Social networks
    - Employment
    - Housing

Preliminary Findings
Access to Transportation

"Some newcomer who start in this country, they don't have a car, they don't have a license, they don't know addresses."

"There are many people who don't have cars. "

"The bus is the main problem where I live."

Questions & Discussion

Thank You