

Finance and Treasury Board Office of the Deputy Minister 7th Floor 1723 Hollis Street P.O. Box 187 Halifax, NS B3J 2N3

902 424-5774 T 902 424-0635 F www.gov.ns.ca

December 2, 2015

Mr. Brandon Rose NSGEU 255 John Savage Avenue Dartmouth, NS B3B 0J3



NSGEU

Dear Mr. Rose:

Re: You are entitled to part of the information you requested - FIN-15-40

The [name of Department] received your application for access to information under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* on October 15, 2015.

In your application, you requested a copy of the following records:

"Please provide us with the following, in respect of each date between October 22, 2013 and October 9, 2015 (inclusive):

- (i) all briefing notes, reports, studies. research and analysis speaking to any possible new P3 partnerships in Nova Scotia; and
- (ii) all correspondence on the same subject. The request is limited to materials produced for or by individuals holding the following positions: Premier, Premier's Office staff, Minister, Deputy Minister, Associate Deputy Minister, Minister's Executive Assistant, Minister's Communications Director, Communications Officers, Executive Directors and all pertinent staff within the Premier's Office. Office of Planning and Priorities and the Departments of Finance & Treasury Board, Internal Services and Transportation Infrastructure Renewal.

You are entitled to part of the records requested. However, we have removed some of the information from this record according to subsection 5(2) of the *Act*. The severed information is exempt from disclosure under the Act for the following reasons:

- Section 13: information which would reveal the substance of the deliberations of Executive Council.
- Section 14: advice by or for a public body or minister.
- Section 20: unreasonable invasion of personal privacy.

The remainder of the record is enclosed.

You have the right to ask for a review of this decision by the Information Access and Privacy Commissioner (formerly the Review Officer). You have 60 days from the date of this letter to exercise this right. If you wish to ask for a review, you may do so on Form 7, a copy of which is attached. Send the completed form to the Information Access and Privacy Commissioner, P.O. Box 181, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 2M4.

Please contact Rhia Perkins at 902-424-3773 or by e-mail at <u>rhia.perkins@novascotia.ca</u>, if you need further assistance in regards to this application.

Yours truly

George McLellan Deputy Minister

Attach.

From: Sent: To: Subject: Gatien, Geoffrey M Monday, April 07, 2014 2:23 PM Dimick, Vicki C Accepted: FW: P3 Canada Funding - Understanding how to Apply

From: Sent: To: Subject: Attachments: Dimick, Vicki C Friday, May 22, 2015 4:41 PM Rafuse, Byron G; Gatien, Geoffrey M FW: 100 Series highway Feasibility Study Framework for 100 Series Highway Twinning.doc

Just an FYI – there will be an application to P3 Canada in June for assistance with the twinning and possible tolling of eight highway projects. A RFP for a Feasibility Study will go out over the summer and the results of that will be in by early 2016 that will indicate if any of the projects are potentials for P3's (tolls) and if so P3 Canada will participate in the funding.

Rob MacKay of P3 Canada has been working with the project team and has advised S. 14 (1)

S. 14(1)

I will work on the feasibility study team to develop and evaluate the RFP's so if you have any questions just let me know.

Vicki

From: Hackett, Peter Sent: Friday, May 22, 2015 4:29 PM To: Dimick, Vicki C; Ward, Brian; Saurette, Diane; Fitzner, Bruce Cc: Benjamin, Margaret A Subject: 100 Series highway Feasibility Study

Hi all,

S. 14(1)

I will await her response

I was speaking with Janice Harland regarding our P3 application and she was going to check inside Treasury if there was S. 14 (1) She may not have an answer back to me right away but will probably next week. I would suggest S. 14 (1)

and let you know what she comes back with. Janice and Vickie have both been added to our Steering committee meeting next week to discuss the project, funding and P3 Canada.

Thanks and have a good weekend,

Peter

Peter Hackett, P.Eng Executive Director Highway Engineering and Construction NSTIR Halifax, N.S. 902-424-5687

From: Sent: To: Subject: Attachments: Dimick, Vicki C Tuesday, June 09, 2015 11:31 AM Gatien, Geoffrey M; Rafuse, Byron G FW: Cabinet Feasibility Study Cabinet Feasibility Study

Just and FYI. The NSTIR team is going to Cabinet S. 14(1), S 13(1)

S. 14 (1)

S. 13 (1), 14(1)

Vicki

Framework for 100 Series Highway Twinning

Document

This scoping document represents the framework that will be required for review when preparing the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the feasibility study for 100 Series Highway projects – 2015.

Introduction

The Province of Nova Scotia has requested that Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (NSTIR) conduct a feasibility study in twinning several sections of Nova Scotia's 100 Series Highways. The review will also examine methods for paying for the total construction, maintenance and operation of these highways through alternate funding such as tolling or long term lending, using the P3 model set out by P3 Canada.



Study Areas

The eight sections of 100 Series Highways and the study areas are as follows:

- 1. Highway 101 Exit 5, Garlands Crossing to Twinning at trunk 1 underpass, approximately 9.5 kms [see Map A]
- Highway 101 End of twinning at Gaspereau River to Grant Drive Coldbrook, approximately 24.7 kms [see Map B]
- 3. Highway 103 From Exit 5 at Tantallon to Exit 12 Bridgewater, approximately 71 kms, [see Map C]
- Highway 104 End of Twinning at Sutherland's River to beginning of twinning at Antigonish, approximately 37.8 kms [see Map D]
- 5. Highway 104 End of twinnng at Taylors Road to Auld's Cove, approximately 38.4 kms [see Map E]
- 6. Highway 104 Port Hawkesbury Bypass, approximately 6.75 kms (see Map F)
- 7. Highway 104 River Tillard to Sydport Access Road, approximately 80 kms (see Map G)
- 8. Highway 107 From Porter's Lake to Duke Street, Bedford, approximately 33 kms [see Map H]

Most of these sections of highway have been extensively reviewed in the past as candidates for twinning as a result of increases in traffic volumes since these existing two lane highways were constructed over 30-40 years ago.

Recent safety studies on Highways 103 and 104 suggest that existing travel lanes need to be upgraded on these highways but ultimately twinning would provide a safer solution based on the traffic flow. The 100 Series Highways are the main links for communities and commerce in the Province of Nova Scotia and all of these highways provide an important network contributing to the economic viability of the Province.

Study Aims and Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the viability of twinning portions of the existing highways named in the study areas. The study will look at the cost to construct, operate and maintain these highways within the scope limits identified and determine viable options to fund these projects either through tolls or other P3 models.

The study should estimate the economic impacts to the communities directly and indirectly affected by twinning of the highways that connect them to major centres in the Province.

Major Items to be observed for this study:

- 1. Geographical
- 2. Costs
- 3. Financial Models
- 4. Social Impacts
- 5. Environmental Impacts
- 6. Community Consultation

Socio-Economic Impact:

Twinning highways would provide a safer, slightly quicker, and more convenient route to move goods, services and people throughout the Province. The vender will be required to look at current economic conditions of communities throughout the proposed corridors and at the trends to determine if twinning the highways will have a short, medium or long term socio-economic impact, positive or negative on these areas. This review may include population, financial, social, health and cultural programs that will be affected.

Project Costs:

The vender will be required to review the entire detailed cost components of building these highways to ensure that a proper budget is analysed. These costs will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1. Highway and bridge design costs (consulting in-house and construction costs).
- 2. Land acquisition costs
- 3. Construction costs to include highway/bridges and all other structures required.
- Environmental costs all costs associated with environmental remedies, relocates, designs, working
 with Nova Scotia Environment and Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, contractors and
 consultant plans, etc.
- 5. Engineering and Inspection costs, predesign and post construction. Project Engineers, Inspectors and Consultants.
- 6. All legal costs associated with land purchases, contracts, agents, design build agreement, etc,
- 7. Financing costs banking costs, insurance costs, etc.
- 8. Operation and Maintenance of the highways toll collection costs, administrative costs, summer and winter maintenance costs equal to NSTIR's season level of service maintenance standards.

Financing Models:

The vender will be required to review the various financing models available through P3 Canada funding and determine which if any funding model would be best suited to the construction, maintenance and financing of these sections of highways. The vender will also be required to review the type of tolling that could be used, with direct point of sale, fully automated or a combination of both if tolling is an option, and the overall costs of the tolling method.

Traffic Model:

The vender will be required to use a valid traffic modelling plan to determine the current, short term and longer term traffic flow on these highways. The vender will determine if tolling would be a valid option based on these traffic volumes and at what cost would each passenger or commercial vehicle be charged in order to pay off the highway within a specified period of time.

Community Consultation:

Upon the completion of 70% of the report, the vender will be required to engage the communities along these corridors to discuss the findings and explain their results to the public. The vender will host the open houses in the local areas where the public could view the draft report and discuss the project openly.

Environmental Impact:

In the building of major construction projects, often the environment is impacted by the disturbance and disruption of the land. As part of the project, the consultant will be required to review each project and determine what the environmental impact would be if the roadways were constructed, the monetary cost to build environmental controlled structures, temporary or permanent, in order to provide the least amount of disturbance to the natural areas.

Highway Description

Highway 101

Highway 101 is a controlled access highway that begins in Bedford, Nova Scotia, and heads west through the Annapolis Valley ending in Yarmouth. The highway is a vital link from the metro Halifax area to the counties of Hants, Kings, Annapolis, Digby and Yarmouth. It also provides for the free flow of goods and services within these communities as well as connecting with the remainder of the Province and Canada.

The existing highway is controlled access divided from Bedford at Exit 1 to Garlands Crossing at Exit 5. The highway is controlled access undivided from Exit 5 at Garlands Crossing to just west of Trunk 1 overpass at Falmouth. From Trunk 1 to Hortonville the highway is divided. After Hortonville the highway is controlled undivided.

The highway connects many towns and communities which is evident by many interchanges provided along its entire corridor.

Corridor under Review:

The two corridors of Highway 101 under review are:

- 1. From Exist 5 to just west of Trunk 1 overpass and;
- 2. From Hortonville to Exist 14 at Coldbrook.

The first corridor section is a section that bi-passes the town of Windsor, Nova Scotia. It includes 4 interchanges, the Windsor Causeway, and has some geological challenges with a subsection at Windsor consisting of karst topography overlaid by glacial till in some areas.

Highway 101 - Exit 5, Garlands Crossing to Twinning at Trunk 1 underpass, approximately 9.5 kms

This section bypasses the town of Windsor, Nova Scotia. It includes 4 interchanges, the Windsor Causeway, and has some geological challenges with the subsection consisting of Karst in some areas

Map A



The second section is a fairly straight section of highway which bypasses the towns of Wolfville, New Minas, Kentville and Coldbrook. It also includes 4 interchanges which give access to these important Annapolis Valley Communities. Geology consists of soft mudstones and sandstones overlaid by glacial till and ancient lake sediments.

Highway 101

Highway 101 - End of twinning at Gaspereau River to Grant Drive Coldbrook - approximately 24.7 kms

The second section is a fairly straight section of highway which bypasses/connects the towns of Wolfville, New Minas, Kentville, and Coldbrook. It also include 4 interchanges which gain access to these Annapolis Valley communities.

Map B



Highway 103 - From Exit 5 at Tantallon to Exit 12 Bridgewater - approximately 71 kms

Highway 103 is a controlled access highway which begins in Bayer's Lake, Nova Scotia, and heads west along the South Shore of the Province ending in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. The highway is a vital link to the counties of Halifax, Lunenburg, Queens, Shelburne and Yarmouth, to move people, goods and services throughout these communities as well as a connector to the remainder of the province and the rest of Canada. The highway is controlled access divided from Bayer's Lake to Tantallon Exit 1 to Exit 5. The remainder of the highway is mostly undivided controlled access except for a new location near the western part of the Highway. The geology consists of bedrock granites and quartzite overlaid by glacial till.

The Highway connects many towns and communities which is evident by the number of interchanges along the route.

Corridor Under Review:

The two corridors under review for this study are (1) from Exit 5 to Exit 8 and (2) from Exit 9 to Exit 12.

The first section is currently a controlled access which begins in Tantallon Nova Scotia and ends in Chester Basin, bypassing and connecting the communities of Hubbards, Mahone Bay and Chester, Nova Scotia. The road has 3 interchanges on it as part of the access to these communities. Highway 103 is paralleled by Nova Scotia Highway Trunk 3 as an alternate route. The back slopes can be quite vertical in some locations and mainly cuts through rock and till.

The second section under Review is from Exit 9 Mahone Bay to Exit 12, Bridgewater. The section of road bypasses/connects the communities of Mahone Bay, Lunenburg and Bridgewater. The realignment through this area is relative flat with 3 interchanges and the geology is mostly rock and sand.

Map C



Highway 104 – End of Twinning at Sutherland's River to beginning of twinning at Antigonish – approximately 37.8 kms

Highway 104 is also the Trans-Canada Highway beginning in Amherst, Nova Scotia and ending in Auld's Cove, Nova Scotia. The highway is divided controlled from Exit 1 to Exit 27 with a 45 km portion of it being part of the Cobequid Pass Toll Highway. The remainder of the highway is undivided controlled except for 8 kms from west of Exit 31 to Exit 34 where it is divided controlled access and through the communities of Port Hawkesbury and Auld's Cove where it is undivided and uncontrolled.

Corridor Under Review:

The first corridor section under review Highway 104 is from Exit 27 in Sutherlands River to the beginning of the turnaround section west of Antigonish approximately 40 kms. The highway is two lane undivided and is a fairly straight alignment except through the area of Barney's River. NSTIR is looking at a new adjunct around the Barney's River/Marshy Hope area when the highway is twinned. The geology is glacial till, rock and clay. This section of highway does not bypass or service any major communities and therefore only has one interchange along the corridor.

Map D



Highway 104 - End of twinning at Taylors Road to Auld's Cove, approximately 38.4 kms

Corridor Under Review:

This section under review is from Taylors Road, to the east of Antigonish, heading east to the Canso Causeway, approximately 40 kms. This section is currently an undivided controlled access highway, bypassing or accessing the communities of Heatherton, Monastery and Havre Boucher. The highway is fairly flat with a few steep grades at the eastern end, with interchanges and several level crossings along the corridor. The geology is mainly glacial till and rock.

Map E



Highway 104 Cape Breton Island - Port Hawkesbury Bypass

Corridor Under Review:

Highway 104 on Cape Breton Island ends at the rotary in Port Hastings and does not begin again until the eastern end of Port Hawkesbury, Trunk 4 (Reeves Street) which connects through Port Hastings and Port Hawkesbury. Trunk 4 through this area is a 4 lane uncontrolled access highway. In order to avoid the congestion of Reeves Street (Trunk 4) a two lane controlled access highway is being proposed to begin just north of the Port Hastings Rotary on Highway 105, heading east to Exit 43. The road would connect to existing Highway 104. The area through here is relatively flat with some rock and glacial till. It would require a new interchange at Highway 105 and an upgrade at Exit 43. ROW would be required for future highway twinning.

Map F



Highway 104 - Cape Breton Island

Corridor Under Review:

The second section of new Highway 104 across Cape Breton Island would begin at River Tillard and head easterly to intersect at the Highway 125, Sydport Interchange. This would be a new two lane controlled access highway which would parallel Trunk 4 along the south side of the Bras d'Or Lakes. The area is fairly flat, with some rolling hills at the western end and the geology consists of bedrock and gravelly tills. At the present time there is no information on the number of interchanges required, however, one would be needed at the River Tillard end and a large structure is required across the Bras d'Or Lakes near Jacksonville. The road would be two lane but would require ROW for future twinning.

Map G



Highway 107 - From Porter's Lake to Duke Street, Bedford, approximately 33 kms

The study area of highway 107 would begin in Porter's Lake, Exit 19 and leading westerly to Exit 17 and East Preston. This section of Highway is currently undivided two lane section relatively flat. The section of road services Porter's Lake, Lake Echo and East Preston. The geology consists of a thin layer of glacial till on bedrock.

The second section of Highway 107 is from Exit 17 along a newly proposed route which bypasses Main Street, Dartmouth, and reconnects Highway 107 before intersection with Highway 118. This section would be four lane divided, uncontrolled access highway to link Exit 17 to Highway 107 at a new interchange just past Loon Lake. From this new interchange to Highway 118, this section is two lane, controlled undivided. The geology is similar to the previous section being a thin layer of glacial till on bedrock.

The third section of Highway 107 under review is from Akerly Boulevard to Duke Street, Bedford. This section would include four new lanes of controlled access highway to connect the remaining of Highway 107 to Bedford. NSTIR is currently reviewing this corridor design. Geology similar to the previous sections with thicker deposits of glacial till.

Corridor Under Review:

Highway 107 is an undivided controlled access highway beginning in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, (Burnside), south of Highway 118 and ending in Musquodoboit Harbour. The Highway connects the communities of Dartmouth, Lake Echo, Porter's Lake and Musquodoboit Harbour and the Eastern Shore. The highway is a vital link to these communities to connect with Metro Halifax, the remainder of the Province and Canada. Highway 107 is paralleled by Trunk 7 along the majority of the corridor as an alternate routed.

Map H



NOTE PAGES

Advisory Committee Representation

- Brian Ward, Highway Engineering Services
- Justin Tanner, Capital Programs
- Jason Rae, Highway Planning and Design
- Ryan Swinamer, Structural Engineering
- Ian MacCallum, Environmental Services
- Vicki Dimick, Financial Services
- Stephen MacKenzie, Acquisition of Disposal
- Dwayne Cross, Traffic Engineering and Road Safety

All S13(1), 14(1)

Gatien, Geoffrey M

From: Sent: To: Subject: Attachments: Dimick, Vicki C Tuesday, June 09, 2015 3:47 PM Gatien, Geoffrey M; Rafuse, Byron G FW: Presentation to TPB, S. 14(1), S. P3 Feasibility TPB-June 2015 v 2.pptx

From: Ward, Brian Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 2:16 PM To: Dimick, Vicki C Subject: FW: Presentation to TPB, ^{5, 14(1), S.}

FYI

The presentation is only 4 slides, Peter will do the presentation.

From: Rankin, Bonnie Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 1:33 PM To: LaFleche, Paul T; Strang, Aimee J; Ward, Brian; Reardon, Noella Cc: Benjamin, Margaret A; Harland, Janice A; Fitzner, Bruce; Stutely, Heather Subject: RE: Presentation to TPB, ^{S, 14(1), S,}

Hello

Attached is the updated presentation, change to last slide to clarify that June 12, 2015 is an annual deadline.

Bonnie

Bonnie Rankin, LLB Manager, Legislative and Policy Services Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal 902-424-2291 T/902-424-1163 F

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From: LaFleche, Paul T Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 1:00 PM To: Strang, Aimee J; Ward, Brian; Reardon, Noella Cc: Benjamin, Margaret A; Rankin, Bonnie; Harland, Janice A; Fitzner, Bruce; Stutely, Heather Subject: Re: Presentation to TPB, ^{S. 14(1), S.}

Changes coming

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Bell network.

All 13(1), 14(1)

From: Strang, Aimee J Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2015 12:53 PM To: Ward, Brian; Reardon, Noella Cc: Benjamin, Margaret A; Rankin, Bonnie; Harland, Janice A; Fitzner, Bruce; Stutely, Heather; LaFleche, Paul T Subject: RE: Presentation to TPB, ^{5, 14(1), S.}

Thank you Brian. Yes, you will be presenting^{S. 14(1), S. 13(1)}

Aimee

From: Ward, Brian Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 10:01 AM To: Reardon, Noella; Strang, Aimee J Cc: Benjamin, Margaret A; Rankin, Bonnie; Ward, Brian; Harland, Janice A; Fitzner, Bruce; Stutely, Heather; LaFleche, Paul T Subject: RE: Presentation to TPB, ^{5, 14(1), S.}

Hi,

Here is the PowerPoint presentation on as requested. S. 14(1), S. 13(1)

It's my understanding we are presenting S. 14(1), S. 13(1)

S. 14(1), S. 13(1)

Please confirm.

Brian

From: Reardon, Noella Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 8:46 AM To: Ward, Brian Cc: Benjamin, Margaret A Subject: RE: Presentation to TPB, ^{S. 14(1), S.}

Hi Brian,

Aimee Strang is still awaiting the power point version, who did you send it to yesterday and did you copy her?

Thanks, Noëlla

From: Ward, Brian Sent: June-08-15 3:49 PM To: Reardon, Noella Subject: Re: Presentation to TPB, ^{8, 14(1), S.}

Yes

Being sent now

Brian J. Ward, P.Eng Director of Highway Engineering Services NSTIR 902-424-4268 Brian.Ward@NovaScotia.ca

BlackBerry Reply

From: Reardon, Noella Sent: Monday, June B, 2015 2:09 PM To: Ward, Brian Subject: FW: Presentation to TPB, S. 14(1), S.

Hi Brian:

Was this you? Would you mind sending a Power Point version to Aimee Strang.

Thanks, Noëlla

From: Strang, Aimee J Sent: June-08-15 12:47 PM To: Reardon, Noella Subject: Presentation to TPB, S. 14(1), S.

All S. 14(1), S 13(1)

Hello Noella,

S. 14(1), S. 13(1)

A presentation was received from TIR last Friday for the upcoming Treasury and Policy Board Meeting I was not in the office Friday and am just noticing now that the presentation was sent over as a PDF. Would there be any way to have the powerpoint version sent to me via email? The presentation is titled^{S. 14(1), S. 13(1)}

Thank you.

Aimee Strang Cabinet Committee Coordinator Executive Council Office 902-424-5970 strangai@gov.ns.ca



S. 13(1), S. 14(1)







2

From: Sent: To: Subject: Attachments: Dimick, Vicki C Thursday, July 16, 2015 1:31 PM Gatien, Geoffrey M FW: P3 Canada Fund Application P3 Canada Fund- NS 100 Series Toll Highways.PDF

FYI - This is just the official notice that the Application to PPP Canada was received.

From: Hackett, Peter Sent: Thursday, July 16, 2015 12:07 PM To: Dimick, Vicki C; Saurette, Diane; Fitzner, Bruce; Ward, Brian Subject: FW: P3 Canada Fund Application

Letter from P3 Canada for your files.

Peter

From: Benjamin, Margaret A Sent: Thursday, July 16, 2015 10:54 AM To: Hackett, Peter Subject: P3 Canada Fund Application

Hi Peter,

Here is a PDF as requested of the letter from PPP Canada.

Allison



PPP Canada

Chief Executive Officer

100 Queen Street, Suite 630 Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J9 Premier dirigeant

100, rue Queen, Sulte 630 Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 1J9

July 6, 2015

Peter Hackett Executive Director, Highway Engineering and Construction Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal 1672 Granville Street, 4th Floor Halifax, NS B3J 2N2

Dear Mr. Hackett,

Thank you for your interest in the P3 Canada Fund, we are pleased to have received your application for the following project:

Nova Scotia 100 Series Toll Highways

The project screening team has begun work on reviewing all applications received by the June 12, 2015, deadline. Over the next several weeks, you may be contacted for additional information and clarification regarding your project. Once we have completed the screening assessments, we will contact you with results and feedback in the fall.

If you have any questions regarding your submissions or the assessment process, please contact Carol Beaulieu, Vice President, Project Development, at (613) 992-5577 or <u>carol.beaulieu@p3canada.ca</u>.

Sincerely,

John McBride

cc.

Vicki Clark Dimick, Director, Capital Markets Administration, Department of Finance

Canadä

Dimick, Vicki C

From: Sent: To: Subject: Urbanc, Peter V Monday, October 05, 2015 10:49 AM Dimick, Vicki C; McLellan, George Fw: What's a life worth?...Nova Scotia highway

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Bell network.

 From: S. 20(1)

 Sent: Monday, October 5, 2015 10:40 AM

 To: Urbanc, Peter V; S. 20(1)

 Cc: S. 20(1)

 Subject: What's a life worth?...Nova Scotia highway

What is a life worth?

There's no doubt twinning a Nova Scotia highway would save lives, but at more than \$220 million, it would blow the province's budget

National Post - (Latest Edition)

• 3 Oct 2015

By Joe O'Connor

Joe MacDonald had seen enough. It was Feb. 5, 2014, and the chief of the Barney's River, N.S., volunteer fire department had spent the better part of a cold, grey-skied afternoon at an accident on Highway 104, prying the body of a 17-yearold from the twisted wreck of a minivan.

Christopher Karam had graduated from high school five days earlier. He worked at a Swiss Chalet, had a girlfriend, a twin brother, a mom and a dad, and was headed to Newfoundland's Memorial University in the fall to study engineering.

Then he hit a tractor-trailer head-on and now he was dead.

Karam was killed on a 38-km stretch of single-lane highway between Sutherland's River and Antigonish. It winds through scenery locals refer to as God's country, with green hills rolling for miles, onto the sea, but all MacDonald ever sees when he drives the road on his way to work are the bodies.

There have been 14 since 2009, a parade of dead faces and devastating highway scenes that he carries around in his head and that compelled him to come home, on that February day in 2014, and write to Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil.

"How many more people need to die?" MacDonald wrote in an email, urging the province to twin the highway, whatever the cost. "I don't know how many more people we can scrape off this highway." Chief MacDonald had long pleaded with officials the province needed to fix his deadly stretch of road. (There have been more than 321 accidents there since 2009.) A Facebook group and online petition sprang up after the email, calling for similar action.

McNeil's Liberal government recently announced an engineering firm is conducting a feasibility study into twinning eight sections of single-lane highway throughout the province -301.2 km in total, including the section that keeps MacDonald awake at night - and turning them into toll highways.

The problem? Money. Twinning would cost \$1.5 billion. That is a steep capital outlay for a government projecting a \$98-million deficit for 2015-16.

With bottomless riches, governments can, in theory, fix everything. With limited funds and, in Nova Scotia, an aging tax base, they must pick and choose, and every decision has repercussions. Unpopular decisions — a poll of 400 Nova Scotians from November 2014 revealed 51.9 per cent were not in favour of toll highways — can lose elections.

So while the stories Joe MacDonald and the families of the crash victims tell are of unspeakable heartache and loss, there is also the question of public policy, priority and political will. What it can be reduced to is: how much is saving the life of a 17-year-old worth?

Paul de Leur, a road safety engineer, attempted to answer that question in a report completed in 2010 for the Capital Region Intersection Safety Partnership, an Edmonton-based organization committed to enhancing road safety. De Leur broke the cost of fatal accidents into two categories: direct and indirect.

Direct costs included property damage, emergency response and medical services, legal and funeral costs, lost productivity at work, travel delay and environmental costs. Calculating direct costs involved the simple adding of numbers. For the greater Edmonton area, it was \$181,335 for each fatal accident.

Indirect costs are much more complicated to quantify, since they encompass all those messy human emotions — pain, suffering, grief — most deeply felt after the tragic loss of a loved one.

What de Leur found was our "willingness-to-pay," that is, the amount of money an individual would be willing to pay to reduce the risk of death for themselves and others, worked out to \$5,362,458 per fatality. To avoid injury, the number was \$95,032. To protect property: zero dollars.

Which brings us back to Nova Scotia, a cash-starved province with a deficit problem. Geoff MacLellan, the transportation minister, comes from Glace Bay, Cape Breton, and commutes home weekends from Halifax, driving the route monitored by Chief MacDonald and the other volunteer firefighters in Barney's River.

MacLellan has driven through snow, sleet, in the dark and in the howling Nova Scotia wind, and believes, "without question, a straight, divided highway is your best option for engineered safety."

But he also knows the numbers. His department's annual highway budget for capital projects is \$220 million, while the preliminary cost estimates for twinning the stretch between Antigonish and Sutherland's River would "be north of \$220 million."

In other words, if twinning happens, the province won't be picking up the tab, hence all the talk of tolls, which can be an uncomfortable topic in Nova Scotia political circles.

The province has one twinned toll highway, the Cobequid Pass, between Thomson Station and Masstown. Twenty-five years ago, the area was regarded as a "valley of death" for drivers and the scene of 52 fatal accidents in a decade.

Then-premier John Savage's Liberals championed the privately funded project to twin the highway, which opened in 1997. The voters of Cumberland County then repaid the government for what many viewed, and still do, as a punitive local tax through tolling — 2 each way — by not voting a Liberal into the provincial legislature for the next six elections.

But MacLellan remains undeterred.

"Fundamentally, if you want to drastically increase safety and take away the ability for those catastrophic head-on collisions and fatal-- ities, then you have to look at large-scale twinning — and our only option is to look at introducing tolls," he says. "It is a taboo in this province, but ..."

But Chief Joe MacDonald isn't a politician. He is a people person, and would happily plunk \$2 into a toll bucket twice a day not to have his pager go off at noon, say, on an otherwise perfect Nova Scotia summer afternoon, and feel a chill as he climbs into his truck and heads to the 104 to deal with another crash.

"These aren't just statistics we are talking about," he says. "These are lives, because we are not just talking about the deaths, we are talking about life, and how each death changes a family."

Sandra Carver got to work on Friday Oct. 17, 2014, and was peeling through her to do list as the recreation coordinator at a seniors' home while thinking what she always did on Fridays: her husband, Ben, would be coming home to her and the boys in Sheet Harbour from his job in Antigonish that night.

Then her boss came around the corner. An RCMP officer was waiting to see her. Ben Carver had been killed at 5:30 a.m. in a head-on collision on the 104. The road was wet and foggy. He was 37.

"My two boys are what keep me going now, and I have my moments, but I have to be strong for them," Sandra Carver says, her voice cracking. "I loved everything about Ben."

She sees him in both the boys. Austin, now 10, is always fiddling with things, trying to figure them out. Alex, a year younger, is full of mischief and fun. They always think of others first, just like their dad always did.

Carver would give anything to have him back. Wouldn't you?





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Dimick, Vicki C

From: Sent: To: Subject: Dimick, Vicki C Monday, October 05, 2015 10:55 AM Urbanc, Peter V RE: What's a life worth?...Nova Scotia highway

Thanks Peter.

From: Urbanc, Peter V Sent: Monday, October 05, 2015 10:49 AM To: Dimick, Vicki C <Vicki.Dimick@novascotia.ca>; McLellan, George <George.McLellan@novascotia.ca> Subject: Fw: What's a life worth?...Nova Scotia highway

Sent from my BlackBerry 10 smartphone on the Bell network.

From: S. 20(1) Sent: Monday, October 5, 2015 10:40 AM To: Urbanc, Peter V; S. 20(1) Cc: S. 20(1) Subject: What's a life worth?...Nova Scotia highway

S. 20(1)

What is a life worth?

There's no doubt twinning a Nova Scotia highway would save lives, but at more than \$220 million, it would blow the province's budget

National Post - (Latest Edition)

3 Oct 2015

By Jue O'Connor

Joe MacDonald had seen enough. It was Feb. 5, 2014, and the chief of the Barney's River, N.S., volunteer fire department had spent the better part of a cold, grey-skied afternoon at an accident on Highway 104, prying the body of a 17-yearold from the twisted wreck of a minivan.

Christopher Karam had graduated from high school five days earlier. He worked at a Swiss Chalet, had a girlfriend, a twin brother, a mom and a dad, and was headed to Newfoundland's Memorial University in the fall to study engineering.

Then he hit a tractor-trailer head-on and now he was dead.

Karam was killed on a 38-km stretch of single-lane highway between Sutherland's River and Antigonish. It winds through scenery locals refer to as God's country, with green hills rolling for miles, onto the sea, but all MacDonald ever sees when he drives the road on his way to work are the bodies. There have been 14 since 2009, a parade of dead faces and devastating highway scenes that he carries around in his head and that compelled him to come home, on that February day in 2014, and write to Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil.

"How many more people need to die?" MacDonald wrote in an email, urging the province to twin the highway, whatever the cost. "I don't know how many more people we can scrape off this highway."

Chief MacDonald had long pleaded with officials the province needed to fix his deadly stretch of road. (There have been more than 321 accidents there since 2009.) A Facebook group and online petition sprang up after the email, calling for similar action.

McNeil's Liberal government recently announced an engineering firm is conducting a feasibility study into twinning eight sections of single-lane highway throughout the province -301.2 km in total, including the section that keeps MacDonald awake at night - and turning them into toll highways.

The problem? Money. Twinning would cost \$1.5 billion. That is a steep capital outlay for a government projecting a \$98-million deficit for 2015-16.

With bottomless riches, governments can, in theory, fix everything. With limited funds and, in Nova Scotia, an aging tax base, they must pick and choose, and every decision has repercussions. Unpopular decisions — a poll of 400 Nova Scotians from November 2014 revealed 51.9 per cent were not in favour of toll highways — can lose elections.

So while the stories Joe MacDonald and the families of the crash victims tell are of unspeakable heartache and loss, there is also the question of public policy, priority and political will. What it can be reduced to is: how much is saving the life of a 17-year-old worth?

Paul de Leur, a road safety engineer, attempted to answer that question in a report completed in 2010 for the Capital Region Intersection Safety Partnership, an Edmonton-based organization committed to enhancing road safety. De Leur broke the cost of fatal accidents into two categories: direct and indirect.

Direct costs included property damage, emergency response and medical services, legal and funeral costs, lost productivity at work, travel delay and environmental costs. Calculating direct costs involved the simple adding of numbers. For the greater Edmonton area, it was \$181,335 for each fatal accident.

Indirect costs are much more complicated to quantify, since they encompass all those messy human emotions — pain, suffering, grief — most deeply felt after the tragic loss of a loved one.

What de Leur found was our "willingness-to-pay," that is, the amount of money an individual would be willing to pay to reduce the risk of death for themselves and others, worked out to \$5,362,458 per fatality. To avoid injury, the number was \$95,032. To protect property: zero dollars.

Which brings us back to Nova Scotia, a cash-starved province with a deficit problem. Geoff MacLellan, the transportation minister, comes from Glace Bay, Cape Breton, and commutes home weekends from Halifax, driving the route monitored by Chief MacDonald and the other volunteer firefighters in Barney's River.

MacLellan has driven through snow, sleet, in the dark and in the howling Nova Scotia wind, and believes, "without question, a straight, divided highway is your best option for engineered safety."

But he also knows the numbers. His department's annual highway budget for capital projects is \$220 million, while the preliminary cost estimates for twinning the stretch between Antigonish and Sutherland's River would "be north of \$220 million."

In other words, if twinning happens, the province won't be picking up the tab, hence all the talk of tolls, which can be an uncomfortable topic in Nova Scotia political circles.

The province has one twinned toll highway, the Cobequid Pass, between Thomson Station and Masstown. Twenty-five years ago, the area was regarded as a "valley of death" for drivers and the scene of 52 fatal accidents in a decade.

Then-premier John Savage's Liberals championed the privately funded project to twin the highway, which opened in 1997. The voters of Cumberland County then repaid the government for what many viewed, and still do, as a punitive local tax through tolling - \$2 each way - by not voting a Liberal into the provincial legislature for the next six elections.

But MacLellan remains undeterred.

"Fundamentally, if you want to drastically increase safety and take away the ability for those catastrophic head-on collisions and fatal-- ities, then you have to look at large-scale twinning — and our only option is to look at introducing tolls," he says. "It is a taboo in this province, but ..."

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