

## **Part A: Discussion**

### **Question 1**

What is your opinion of the current condition of the province's 100-series highways included in the study? (Consider safety, traffic, congestion, travel time)

- I think it (the highways) should be tolled, and there should be twinning especially because on the highway to Cape Breton, a lot of people (have been) killed on that highway and on highway 104.
- If you look at the map of Nova Scotia, the section between Digby and Weymouth is called the 101 (but) it's not a 100-series highway. There are blind crests, driveways backing out onto the highway, school zones, and I think we need to get our priorities right. We should continue to finish that section before worrying about twinning (other) sections.
- In response, specific to conditions on roads from Yarmouth to Halifax; the highway itself is not bad, overall the paving and highways are not bad. Drivers going from White Point back to here (Digby) that was paved to here (recently) it is winding, but the conditions are good.
- My comment is the highways are generally good but I want to say we don't have a 103 or 101 at this end at all. Maybe that would be good before we start doing the doubles (twinning).
- I am curious as to why there has not been discussion about finishing it (a highway) down here?
- I have a question. You are considering twinning these 8 sections of highways, and that means 8 toll highways. Have they considered any other costs, like of trucking, and driving up the cost of trucking? Have you considered this cost?
- The conditions of road are not bad. Between here and Cape Breton there are at least 3 sections of highway that were set up with different types of asphalt. One around Uniacke has been there for decades. As far as I know there has never been any feasibility done about how that section benefits or is better than others. Driving there once a week, it would seem (to me) to hold up better, but the reality in some of those test areas, if you look at your daily traffic it is in two peak periods and the traffic in between there is very few cars going. Does it make sense to twin for about 3-4 hours of the day? Maybe tell drivers to smarten up, or pay the price for living in those high traffic areas. Traffic congestion you get when you live near a city is inevitable.

- Back to Digby and Weymouth. The highway 1 or they call it the 101, but it's a one lane highway, and there are heavy trucks, fish trucks, logging trucks and everything. Everyday kids are on the school buses (on that highway), and get off the school buses, and a lot of them get killed.
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## Question 2

Do you think twinning is the only option to improve the province's 100-series highways?

- I am curious if more enforcement was considered as part of (addressing this) safety concern? Distracted drivers are the number one cause, and not the safety or size of the roads.
- Back to question 1 and the current condition. The closer you get to the city, the more attention is paid to them (the highways). Perhaps because politicians see them more often, and that is why they get more attention. If we could get the same attention to our roads, it would be nice. In terms of truckers saving time on twinned highways, I used to drive a truck and didn't like slowing down for a toll booth, and you actually lose lots of time by slowing down. If you put passing lanes in, the slow traffic could be in the other lane to avoid those trucks. As for tolls saving time, I have been there, and every time you need to slow that Rig down you lose time.
- But somewhere along the line you will be slowing down.
- I don't think twinning is the only option. It's too expensive of an option for a lot of Nova Scotia. We need to use more enforcement, more passing lanes, speed indicator signs, and concrete barriers. There (are) much smarter ways to do this (than) twinning. My son lives in Kelowna, British Columbia, and it's an extremely busy highway, and all they did was put cement barriers up. They didn't spend money to blast rock, and that is a busy bumper-to-bumper traffic highway. And we are looking at investing multi-millions of dollars in highways, and we are also in a world developing autonomous vehicles, and vehicles are going to get smarter and smarter. I don't think we need to build these highways because we are going to eliminate the human factor anyway, and that's the only problem. The texting and driving is a serious problem. I drive a truck, and it's amazing how many people (I see that) are texting, and (this is) a problem we need to look at. If they get cross ways in front of you they are dead. I don't know which trucking company you were talking to because I own a trucking company, and we are not willing to pay tolls and other trucking companies (I have talked to) would not want to pay either.
- I agree with the comment about autonomous vehicles. And want to ask, why is there no rest stop areas in our province? And the shoulders on the side of the road are not wide enough without going into the dirt. Just wondering if that has been looked at.

- If you do tolls, will it only be for Nova Scotians, or will it be for out of province, Americans, and anyone coming in, because you mentioned about the transponders and if you had one it would only (cost) half?
- I am very much against tolls, because I think we pay enough taxes. So what if I don't want to pay you. I will drive down the highway and not pay you. These examples have alternate routes but there are places going to Weymouth, where you need to take the highway to get anywhere.
- You have a group here lobbying for a road that was promised 30 years ago. And you talk about tolls and people are just going to start using the highway 1 again, and then it makes it dangerous again. What is the point of the tolls when you can't even finish the highway we started here?
- When they built section between Bridgetown and Coldbrook, because statistically passing lanes were put on hills when trucks slow down. They added passing lanes recently and they put a few more in (directions on where the passing lanes went in), then you don't need twinning. It's a way to upgrade. You get 3-4 cars going 90, and you want to be traveling 100, you have 4 cars you can pass instead of twinning.
- I agree with this gentleman, I don't think there is a need for twinning. There has been enough paid out. Once you start the tolls do you keep them up forever, even after it's paid for? Because now we will need to pay for maintenance. The one (toll) I do think should have stayed, is on the Causeway. I don't see any place in the province that should have twinned highways in the next 5 years.
- I do agree that passing lanes are good, rumble strips good thing too. Cinder blocks are good but I would prefer to crash into a grassy area than a cement block, as it would do less damage to your car.
- Looking at the \$30 million deficit. What do the last 5 years look like? Has it always been a deficit or just this year?
- If this twinning goes ahead. And you said the toll would take up (pay for) 50%, and province (would pay) 25%, and federal government (would pay) 25%. For the provinces 25%, does it come out of the same budget?
- Following up on his point. The 15.5 cents a liter, out of the average liter is going to the department, but it does not include in its HST or any other tax. The pie chart we see when gassing up is significantly larger. Is that 25% (Federal money) coming from all that extra gas tax we give? It seems small (25%) when we are paying them (Federal government) most of the gas tax for the roads we drive on. How is that 25% (from federal government) broken down?
- With the tolling, when you talk about rural Nova Scotia, things that need to be considered, and for those of us in Digby, healthcare is a nice hot topic. When we look at people on the island, they need to pay to get off the island. And then you tell people in

Kentville they need to pay to get to go to Halifax, and this is added to paying for parking. If you are going to treatments it's another burden that people have to think about when they are already struggling, and people are choosing not to have treatments because they can't afford it.

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### Question 3

If twinning is the preferred option to improve the condition of the 100-series highways, do you support using tolls to twin highways sooner than would otherwise be possible given our current budget?

- I don't want to pay any more tax, and we are over taxed, and have poor services to boot. I am opposed to tolls.
- We are paying gas taxes, road taxes and registration, and they have built some nice highways in Halifax. And because they got their first, we are being punished, because the money was spent. We don't get ours (highways) because they spent the money. Between Halifax and the airport, there's quite a bit of traffic, probably 10 times more than in Kentville. Why not put 50 cents on that section, make your budget, and spread it around to all these 8 areas. And nobody is going to worry about 50 cents from Halifax to Truro, but people on Coldborook to Halifax will worry about paying \$2.50 – \$3, that's \$5 bucks round trip, to travel to work every day. That is \$50 bucks a week, and that adds up. Toll the highways we paid for between Halifax and the airport, and it can handle a 50 cent toll, and the rest of us will be happy to pay it when we need to.
- You have to be cheap. Anything above 50 cents, people will not be able to pay it. People have to pay to get off the island, and if there is tolling it has to be cheap.
- Our money has already been spent around the city. Big money has been spent in city and not in rural areas. Now we are being penalized and we should get our fair share.
- Who said these highways were going to cost \$14 million per mile. I can still walk a mile, and I cannot wrap my head around it costing \$14 million per mile.
- My dad built the highways, when they were built and the highway cost \$1 million to build then – what has changed? It is not the wages that have gone up.
- As a small business in Western Nova Scotia, I am against tolls. I am not against twinning highways, but I am against tolls. Let me give you an example. We grow blueberries and they get shipped to Oxford frozen foods, and after they're processed then we ship them back to go through our juice blend, then they're shipped out through the Halifax Harbor. Think about how many times they get shipped, and would get tolled. I cannot pass that cost on. There is no way. One of my neighbors owns a fleet of wood trucks, 8 axel trucks. Most of that wood goes from this end to the province to the other parts and beyond Halifax. Think about the toll on those trucks with 8 axels, every time it moves.

We cannot pass those costs on. There are other ways to (make) these highways (safer) and that's what we have to do. And the province has to understand we cannot put this burden on our rural areas, and small businesses are very important to these small communities, and we have to be careful what we do here.

- To me, twinning is not the preferred option to improve our condition (of highways) and let me give my example. In healthcare, we have this stupid thing called you pay to go in for your services at the hospital. We in Digby have a Mall that is very close (to the hospital) and we have seniors who fall trying to get to the hospital because they can't afford the \$4 to get out after they have a service. We go to different places, and its \$3, and in Cape Breton its \$2, and you go to the city, and we know parking is limited. And we keep saying we have to be fair and when you start saying in Halifax you have to be fair and we won't penalize you, but we do. There are people who don't who come in, because they can't afford our parking fees. Parking is limited, and we're rural, and you're talking about putting highway fees on for something our taxes should be doing. Since parking went in, I was in healthcare for 25 years, and I paid my \$25 a month, because I could afford it but I do not agree with tolls on the highway.
- You mentioned the 10,000 vehicle a day threshold and I notice most of the highways are under that to begin with. How long will these tolls be on, a lot of government putting these taxes in and not getting rid of them.
- You talked about safety, and one of the first questions, and it has come up several times. We have cell phones; we have liquor, now they introduce marijuana. Now they have to train police with this tester for testing marijuana. So, paying tolls, I don't agree. But if it speeds up highways, go for it. But don't make it out of sight (the cost of the toll). Don't make it \$20 for a few kilometers. \$2 on all highways is plenty.
- Have we just done this study in Nova Scotia alone, or have we looked across Canada and seen how other provinces are funding and are doing highway projects in their provinces? Transport Canada is a national safety issue, for Transport Canada. If you buy a utility trailer out in Alberta and you pay to register it for \$100 that is good for as long as you own it. Here in Nova Scotia I register it for \$40 a year, and over 20 years I bought the trailer over again. I would think there should be some type of consistency on issues of registration.
- The tolls you just mentioned about other projects, I believe just about every one of those people have another option. But you're talking about the main highway from here to Halifax, but here you are putting a toll on a highway we have to use. Those highways, like the 407 they are there so people can choose to use them and pay that money, or choose to use the 401. We can't.
- I know you are looking at the cost analysis, and looked other projects over the last couple years. When you got these numbers, is that from contractors like Dexter and stuff? And the contractors you're looking at, is that going to be in-house, or would you be going to 3<sup>rd</sup> party and places in Quebec and US or places like that? I know the

Department of Transportation has the capacity to do it, so will you do it, or contract it out? Is it going to be provincial public servants or all 3<sup>rd</sup> party, and are those 3<sup>rd</sup> party going to be provincial companies or out of province. I am asking for local jobs.

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## **Part B: Written Responses**

### **Question 1**

What is your opinion of the current condition of the province's 100-series highways included in the study? (Consider safety, traffic, congestion, time travel)

- Always feel relieved to be on a twinned hwy (i.e.) when travelling to Halifax when I hit Windsor it is always a better experience. Compared to N.B. - ours need vast improvement.
- I don't think there's anything wrong with the highway, it is the drivers. I think cell phones are the major problem.
- There is a section of the 101 that has a school zone, driveways and blind crests between Digby and Weymouth that needs to be addressed prior to twinning.
- As our area between Digby and Weymouth is not in the study this is a letdown. The Digby to Weymouth route is essentially a neighborhood that has no safety/controlled speed monitoring for large trucks etc.
- The roads are fine, wider shoulders & rest areas would be an improvement. I have never had a problem with congestion.
- I travel 2x/wk Digby-HFX. Mineville to FH worst x2 daily and in the summer on to Chezzetcook - The longer passing lanes at Berwick & up the Valley seem to work. Roads are not in bad condition - usual spring potholes.
- Safety 8/10 more passing lanes  
Congestion 9/10 no problem  
Time 9/10 no problem
- Generally good. \* One problem in western NS is that we don't have a complete 103 or 101.
- I feel some of the selected Hwy's are candidates for twinning but not all  
Congestion is poor on the 107, 103, 101 causing unnecessary passing. Hence accidents. But these are often only during commutes, midday has little traffic.
- The sections of Hwy 101 included in the study can experience a lot of congestion in clear road conditions, and are at a standstill in the event of construction/repairs. Hwy 103 experiences similar impacts. On twinned highways in case of closure, the other side becomes a two-lane highway where traffic can continue to flow.
- There should have been more passing lanes when the 100-series highways were introduced.
- They are far too congested. Twinning is a great solution.

- Most are good with a little extra work in a few areas where widening existing 2 lanes would be a benefit.
- Highway itself isn't too bad. Waiting for highways from Digby to Weymouth. If you had a few more passing lanes it would make a world of difference.
- There are areas of the 101 that need to be twinned for safety reasons. Also on the 103 where there have been a number of accidents.
- For safety travel time.
- Conditions vary by area and traffic flow but are good.
- Highway cond. is very poor (overpasses poor)
- This section is not finished yet. (Digby to Weymouth)
- Hwys are busy  
Lots of wear & tear
- Highways 100 series are as good as can be expected, but the highways that are not 100 series should be completed first.

## Question 2

Do you think twinning is the only option to improve the province's 100-series highways?

- Increased Federal funding. Increase gambling income cut. Trains. Public transit.
- No - camera, undercover officers. Twinning is not going to stop people from using cell phones and neglecting safety rules
- No. Costs are not justified when so many other highways are in poor condition. 101 from Bridgetown to Kingston need passing lanes.
- No some areas do not require twinning but should be at least 100-series highway!
- No: You might consider improving enforcement of existing highways traffic act.  
Photo radar could be an option  
Better shoulders, rest areas.
- No - not in all cases.  
more passing lanes, the longer ones would make a difference.  
enforce cell phone & speeding violations.
- No  
Passing lanes would help
- No! Use must more enforcement on highways. More passing lanes. Speed indicator signs. Concrete barriers. Cars are getting smarter.
- No. The only other alternative I can think of is cement dividers of a size in which they are no wider than the current yellow lines. There would be no need to appropriate land as the current 33 1/3 provincial land would suffice.
- More policing & higher fine for cell phone user's

\$1000.00 first offense.

- Twinning is one of the many options available. I would concur with the assessment of twinning on highways with more than 10,000 vehicles a day. However, we must not forget that there are unfinished sections of 100-series highways in the province.
- Not necessarily. More passing lanes.  
Twinning - but "no" tolls.
- I think financially, it is the best solution. Safety-wise, it will reduce road rage as you will not be stuck behind a slow driver the entire length of the valley.
- No - more passing lane with a minimum speed limits.
- No, passing lanes.
- No
- Yes twinning is the only option.
- Only above 10000, and connect them first like Halifax to Yarmouth, etc.
- No  
Valley passing lanes work  
Driver Education
- No!
- No - passing lanes made

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### Question 3

If twinning is the preferred option to improve the condition of the 100-series highways, do you support using tolls to twin highways sooner than would otherwise be possible given our current budget?

- Yes - having used toll Hwys I find people get used to it. Also brings the expense of use to the user.
- No
- Yes: only if this does not drain the provincial budget to pay the provinces portion of the cost.
- Yes as long as the old roads are (indecipherable) maintained.
- No way
- No- we are underserved in this area and have to travel to HFX for most services and medical needs. Toll adds to the financial burden for many. Causes traffic to divert and then there will be more secondary highway repair.
- No  
Toll the 102 where traffic volumes will pay off
- Absolutely do not support tolls. Toll would further destroy the rural economy.

- No. We are the highest taxes in the country. 25% is insufficient from federal monies. We have a 100 million dollar paving plant that our own TIR employees can run and work the twinning efforts. We have all the earth moving equipment and trained staff that we don't need third party private contractors doing the work. Our engineers are survey are employed across the NS civil service  
If there is more tax beside the IS.SC [indecipherable word] allotted to TIR then Ottawa can increase its contribution as well as a piece of the offshore profits Ottawa takes.
- If it will speed it up, by all means toll. But no more than \$2.00 fee.
- Yes, on roads with a traffic flow above 10,000 vehicles a day.
- No. The government needs to better utilize their money. "Our taxes" that are paid. Taxes on gas, registration, etc.
- I support using tolls if the fees remain under \$0.80 and they are not permanent.
- In only situations where the community has been outspoken in endurance of major problem are need to improve for major safety issues.
- Twinning will be nice. We will wait for the twinning to happen.  
Do not want to pay for tolls!\*
- No
- Yes I support using toll
- Yes
- Why can't the govt. pay  
How come Hwy building is so expensive
- No!
- No I am not in favor is using tolls

#### Question 4

Do you have any other comments or questions?

- Will work be contracted to provincial companies? Local employment a priority by region? Hwy 101 Digby to Weymouth - must be a priority! It may be low turnout tonight to the meeting is a result of the area being weary of fighting for it. It has been years. I also feel that this section, likely constructed standard 2 lane should not be tolled.
- I don't think it's fair for people to have to pay for highway twinning when it's really not necessary. It is not the highways; it's the drivers that don't take safety seriously.
- Provincial budgets should be used to maintain current highways and not twinning or upgrading highways that are already in good condition.
- Unfortunately Digby to Weymouth #1 is never a priority. The trucks that provide all that is harvested from our oceans resource forest land etc. The Digby to Saint John and Yarmouth to USA both transport these goods. Yes the section is small in this route but

again, it as you say would save time to these ports! Proud employers and local jobs.

- Population is in decline reducing need for highways. Driverless (on almost driverless cars) are coming on fast. These vehicles will drive the speed limit; stay a safe distance from other cars. Brake automatically etc. Driver distraction & drifting out of lanes will be eliminated.

Estimates of cost are almost always underestimated. This whole process is simply a way for the corrupt government to funnel billions of dollars to their corporate buddies.

- Use common sense- is the traffic only bad 2 times a day maybe that is the price you pay to live in high traffic areas.
- If tolls are to be instituted they should be on Hwy 102. Our gas and highway taxes have been used to build that highway. It's time to give back to the areas that were left out when the money was spent.
- People texting while driving is a very serious problem that will not be solved by twinning.

I am not against twinning but it will have to be done as we can afford it

Must look at more efficient ways to build twin highways

- Have the estimate from the cost estimations been compiled from 3rd party contractors solely or civil servant assets in a mix of the two?  
Are these contractors in or out of province? i.e. local jobs  
Are the estimates from paving costs last year or indexed or projected costs at time of possibly starting?  
If toll are accepted will the estimates reduce with a signed intent to begin earlier and use the same companies for the scope of the project.
- The people of Digby are concern about the Sec. of highway from Digby to Weymouth. This has been talk about for the last 40 yr, it's time this work to be completed.
- The province should consider completing the existing two-lane 100 series highways (i.e. Hwy 101 between Weymouth and Digby, sections of Hwy 103 & 105, etc) before twinning and tolling the sections included in the study that have traffic flow below 10,000 vehicles a day.
- I do not agree with having tolls on our highway.
- This cannot be a permanent solution. Nova Scotians cannot afford this forever. If they become too expensive, this project will lose public support.
- I hope common sense prevails as there are so many needs for public money's in other areas as well.
- Rural NS has to pay extra for services as it is because we don't have the services locally. Another cost would be another burden.  
When this is done - local people should be hired!
- When is the piece of the 101 between Digby & Weymouth going to begin? We were told it would start in January and we are in March and nothing has been done.
- When are they going to complete the Hwy 101 from Digby to Weymouth? It's been 36 years since surveyed it.

- The 100 systems should be a totally joined system before twinned, if below 10000  
Digby to Weymouth pass  
Toll not good idea.
- We need our 101 finished
- Priority is to finish 101 first!
- Tolls should be in causeway to Cape Breton if there was any place. Not anywhere else.