



Nova Scotia Government

# TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS WORKSHOP 2

THE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE  
OF NOVA SCOTIA

Report

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# Introduction

On September 11th and 12th of 2012, the Province hosted the second Transportation Solutions workshop, involving a broad cross-section of Nova Scotians engaged in transportation issues to introduce and test a draft version of the Sustainable Transportation Strategy (STS). Representatives from municipal government, provincial government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector interested, concerned and engaged with transportation issues from across the province were invited to participate. The workshop was designed to extend and expand conversations that came out of the first Transportation Solutions workshop in February 2012. Cities & Environment Unit from Dalhousie University was engaged to assist with the design and facilitation of both workshops.

The collaborative two-day session to work on the development of the sustainable transportation networks that are uniquely tailored to the needs of local communities. Elected officials and professionals from across the province were present to share a diversity of perspectives. Over the course of the two days, participants lent their thoughts, experiences, and opinions to discussions of what should be included in the STS and how its policies can best respond to the diverse transportation challenges facing Nova Scotia communities. This reports highlights the transportation solutions which emerged from the discussion for sustaining the economic, environmental and social health of communities and regions across the province.

## **February 2012 Transportation Solutions Workshop: Key Themes**

- Support Sustainable transportation with regional land-use planning policy
- Integrate land use and transportation planning
- Recognize the value of investing in community transit and active transportation infrastructure
- Educate and promote
- Influence travel behaviour
- Rationalize the movement of goods
- Foster regional collaboration
- Make people oriented places Complete streets and communities
- Focus on Active Transportation

## Workshop Description

### Goals

- Share the draft STS and build understanding
- Strengthen the STS through collaborative brainstorming and problem solving
- Discuss appropriate tools for implementing the five “sustainable transportation networks” proposed in the STS
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of provincial, municipal, and non-governmental actors in achieving sustainable transportation goals and implementing the STS
- Determine key actions for implementing the STS

### Process

The two-day workshop was hosted as a series of presentations, and breakout group discussion exercises. It was designed to give participants an opportunity to learn about and advance the Sustainable Transportation Strategy as it develops. Recognizing sustainable transportation is a goal that must be approached from many avenues, the draft STS was presented as a series of 5 networks: Active Transportation, Community and Public Transit, Urban and Rural Planning, Vehicles and Fleets, and Community Engagement. Over the two-day event, participants refined the focus and purpose of these five networks through a series of structured discussions. On day one participants drew lessons from case studies of existing sustainable transportation projects in Nova Scotia to help advance the strategy. On day two, participants focused on developing policy directions for the five networks by brainstorming opportunities for collaboration, monitoring, while identifying key actions and actors for making change.

## Results

Transportation is an issue that connects Nova Scotia and relates directly to the prosperity and health of the province and the communities that come together to make it whole. Workshop participants clearly recognized that sustainable transportation is both a shared priority and responsibility across the province. Acting on the issue immediately is necessary to ensure that small towns and urban centres are able to thrive and are not crippled by the mounting costs of doing nothing.

It was made clear that communities and municipal governments face many different types of challenges in regards to transportation and that solutions will only be found through coordinated actions.

The results of the Transportation solutions workshop provide hope. They show that an incredible range of people from different places and backgrounds across Nova Scotia are both recognizing the importance of this issue, and coming to the table with a willingness to take shared responsibility for sustainable transportation actions.

Workshop discussion results are reported here under six headings, one heading for each of the five networks and a sixth on connecting the networks. The discussion results are drawn from workshop discussion notes recorded by participants. The outcomes and recommendations presented here represent the big ideas emerging from workshop discussions. In addition, barriers and issues identified in the workshop discussions are summarized under the five networks to inspire future policy and legislation changes as the STS is launched. Raw notes of all discussions are included in a separate appendix document.

## **Community Transit Network**

Community transit is a more flexible term than public transit. It is used here to describe broad range of public transportation strategies including those applied in areas where traditional public transit systems are not suitable. The community transit network is an important part of keeping smaller communities connected, and ensuring people can move freely across Nova Scotia without depending on a single occupancy vehicle.

### **Recommendations to Advance the Network**

The challenges of providing transportation service in Nova Scotia are substantial. Small and scattered populations, few central locations and suburban development all contribute to making viable transit options hard to attain. Participants describe a Province where individual service providers, often municipalities, are struggling with these conditions with limited help and little collaboration. To make matters worse, at the time of the workshop Acadia lines, the only interprovincial bus line, was in the process of shutting down its operations, threatening to leave communities stranded.

Participants at the workshop are looking to the Province to help stabilize this situation. It is clear that the current public transportation model in Nova Scotia is in need of revision. Communities are looking for ways to make the services they provide more viable and they are looking for a more stable interprovincial system.

There are two major areas where communities are looking for help: service delivery support from the province, and leadership in managing a province wide transportation network. In regards to service delivery, municipalities and other service providers are having a hard time without any stable operating funding. Although people value the Province's current programs: NSTRIP and CTAP and ATAP, these programs will not fund fixed transportation service operations over the long-term.

Beyond finding new resources, participants believe by making transit more efficient they can make it more viable and better for users. Improving the regional coordination of systems is fundamental to achieving greater efficiencies. If service providers can find a way to work together more effectively, their combined efforts can serve a larger area with fewer resources. The Province could play a substantial role in making services more efficient by helping municipalities plan an optimal province wide network and facilitating collaboration between a large number of parties to put that network into operation.

A general picture of an improved Province-wide transportation network came out of workshop discussions. The preferred idea is a network based on fixed-route long-haul public transportation service connected to smaller-scale more flexible regional and local community services networks. The model was described as a provincial transportation spine connected to regional and local hub networks. Regional and local hubs would function as transfer points for passengers from long-haul routes to access local or more regional community transit systems or AT routes. Participants felt strongly that hubs should anchor multi-modal networks, so that upon arrival a user could easily transfer from one mode to another. The idea behind this concept is based on the benefits of cooperation. Each part of the system serves a specific purpose but functions as a necessary part of the whole.

To implement a network of transit hubs around a province-wide spine the Province would have a major role to play defining where interprovincial routes need to go and ensuring they function properly. Although there was some debate about who should provide the province-wide service, participants believed the province at least has a role to play in designing and regulating the service levels in the system.

### Barriers to Implementing the Network

#### Fixed Route Services

**Issue/ Barrier:** Many community-based transit programs across the Province are looking to develop fixed route long-term service models



to provide reliable community-based transit across the Province. However, the Nova Scotia Transit Research Incentive Program is focused on funding the development of door-to-door short-term service. This service model has less potential for providing improved transportation options for a broad cross-section in the long-term.

**Action Required:** Adjust the Nova Scotia Transit Research Incentive Program to allow for greater flexibility in the types of community transit models supported by the program.

### **Provincial Route Scheduling**

**Issue/Barrier:** The Utility and Review Board (UARB) through the Motor Carrier Act currently dictates the scheduling and configuration of for-profit public transport passenger systems in Nova Scotia. As a result of these scheduling and route restrictions imposed by the (UARB) private operators have shut down their service on the grounds of lack of financial viability.

**Action Required:** Review the Motor Carrier Act to allow for greater flexibility in the scheduling of public transport passenger systems, allowing for a greater number of operators to emerge. This could take place in parallel with a provincial community transit network process.

### **Land Use Network**

Land use planning is a big piece of sustainable transportation. The way communities are planned, organized and developed has a large impact on the nature of transportation demand and the viability of different transportation modes. The need to make Nova Scotia communities more transportation-friendly came away as a big message from both of the Transportation Solutions workshops. Current development trends in Nova Scotia are creating communities that are increasingly reliant on personal automobiles and expanding road networks. Many Nova Scotians live in communities and neighbourhoods where getting around without single occupancy vehicles is unrealistic, impossible or simply extremely inconvenient. While the environmental challenges posed by these trends are well understood, the costs of maintaining and using single occupancy vehicle based networks places a heavy burden on residents, both as taxpayers and vehicle owners. A social justice issue is also emerging, where those who cannot afford or are not able to drive are becoming increasingly marginalized and isolated. In today's automobile oriented communities, public transportation cannot manage this responsibility effectively alone. If we cannot afford to provide quality public transportation in today's cities and towns, we need to start changing the way those cities and towns work.

## Recommendations to Advance the Network

Designing Nova Scotia communities to move people in new ways was seen as fundamental to the STS, reinforcing the importance of land use ideas. Participants acknowledged that today's relationship between the automobile and development is working against the province and its communities. People today want communities where anchor destinations like hospitals and schools are accessible on foot, by bike or transit; where neighbourhoods are designed to reinforce transit corridors and transit hubs; where young and old (8 to 80) can walk or bike safely and comfortably to their destinations, access regional and local transit connections; where communities are organized around transportation hubs; and where transportation systems make the community core thrive instead of siphoning business out of it. Rethinking how movement and land use come together demands big picture thinking; it won't be a matter of one solution.

Participants recognize the importance of creating transit supportive settlement patterns, but they were cautious to rely on land-use planning as the tool for change. On one hand participants saw the need for Provincial guidance on transit-friendly land use planning, on the other, they were wary to subscribe to any type of policy direction where additional provincial planning requirements were placed on municipal units. Many municipalities are already frustrated with planning obligations, having produced ICSPs and now working on Climate Change Adaptation Plans. Participants also cautioned that traditional land use planning, although important as a preventative measure, is not a proactive tool for bringing about immediate change.

Nova Scotian communities are looking to the Province to champion a new approach to land use planning, one that focuses on creating rather than taking away. They want the province to help them to create and work towards a vision of what better communities could be like. Several recommendations were given. First, the Province can help establish a clear vision of how land use supports transportation across Nova Scotia. As with community transportation, participants are envisioning a province of connected regional and local centres. Places where planning strives to bring services and families back to the village centre and where services are planned hand-in-hand with transit networks. In communities that lack planning resources, participants suggest the province could send in resource teams to help them develop a local vision of what growth could look like. When visions are established, participants want more collaboration with the Province so that when highways, schools and hospitals are sited they reinforce transit systems, along with the village centre or downtown. Many of these ideas are tied to an approach to economic development

that looks to bring life back to town and village centre and staunch the centralization of services into HRM. They also want Provincial facilities and roads to be designed with AT in mind, so that in-town interchanges and highways are not hazardous pinch points for pedestrians and cyclists.

## Barriers to Implementing the Network

### Transit and AT Supportive Community Design

**Issue/Barrier:** There is no recognition within the Municipal Government Act or the Provincial Statements of Interest as to the importance of developing communities that will be accessible to sustainable forms of transportation.

**Action Required:** Review the Provincial Statements of Interest to include Language related to the goals of STS as required content and policies within future Municipal Planning Strategies.

### Subdivision Design

**Issue/Barrier:** Workshop Participants identified the importance of requiring developers to take a more active role in developing multi-use trails for AT the time of development in parallel with any parkland dedication for subdivision. Currently there is no requirement for trails specifically within the Municipal Government Act or Provincial Subdivision Regulations.

**Action Required:** Amend the Subdivision Regulations to require all future Subdivision projects to provide effective trail connections to support local or regional AT connections as part of the required parkland dedications.

### School Travel Planning

**Issue/Barrier:** Distance between home and school and a lack of safe infrastructure have been identified as barriers to active transportation to and from elementary and secondary schools. Also, the trend of closing smaller schools to centralized new schools has resulted in many students commuting long distances, making it extremely difficult and to walk or cycle.

**Action Required:** Review regulations in Nova Scotia Education Act related to School siting with a view to promoting Active Transportation as a form of commuting. Moreover, this requires safe and continuous

AT connections between schools as well as school locations that reduce dependency on busing or driving students to school. Provide opportunities for Departments advancing THRIVE to review future school siting decisions.

## Active Transportation Network

Many Nova Scotians are starting to see Active Transportation (AT) as an important part of healthier, environmentally conscious and livable communities. If people can travel safely and comfortably without a motor vehicle, a host of benefits come to both the individual and the community. It reduces traffic congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, people become healthier and less in need of healthcare, and people who choose not to drive or cannot drive are empowered. In a less quantifiable way, people see active transportation as a characteristic of inviting people-oriented places, and these types of places are becoming increasingly appealing destinations for tourists, migrants and residents. Such benefits are drawing people from different professional backgrounds and responsibilities to consider AT as part of the solution to their goals, many of whom attended and participated in these discussions.

Unfortunately, many Nova Scotians who have come to this realization are meeting some serious roadblocks in the form of several generations of building our cities, towns, communities, institutions and culture around the automobile. Our cities, roads, policies, statutes and bylaws are simply not built for it. While many Nova Scotians are working to change these conditions, they are struggling to make ground, grappling with established practices, traditions and institutions. If Nova Scotia wants to make active transportation a bigger part of life in this province, political will is needed to start shifting the status quo. Fortunately, events like the Transportation Solutions workshop are showing that strong support for such a change exists in many places at both the community level and within provincial and municipal governments. Equally fortuitous is the fact that many substantial improvements recommended by participants at this workshop can be achieved with relative ease and limited cost.

## Recommendations to Advance the Network

In many discussions, participants saw the need for the province to champion active transportation and to play a leadership role in bringing about comprehensive changes. As a builder of highways and legislator,

the Province is a major force shaping Nova Scotia's roadways and its approach to using them. By shifting its approach to champion active transportation as a legitimate form of transportation, the Province can set a consistent example for municipalities to follow, and can support places where change is already happening. Many participants saw some of the Province's own policies, acts, and its traditional approach to road building as barriers to active transportation. In that sense, many participants felt that one of the first ways for the Province to champion AT was to remove impediments and make sure its own ways of doing things align with AT goals.

Participants also want the province to engage in projects that make a major impact on the ground. In its introductory presentation to the five networks, the province endorsed Bicycle Nova Scotia's idea of an interprovincial bikeways network called the Blue Route. Many participants want the Province to champion this project and help turn it into a reality. Participants recommended the Province work with municipalities to provide them with the support and guidance they need to start building the Blue Route network piece by piece. Before the Province can do this, however, participants suggest the Province establish a vision of the where a Blue Route network spine would go.

In the interest of guiding a cohesive approach to AT across Nova Scotia, participants saw the need for a provincial active transportation policy to provide clear direction and a one-stop resource to municipalities across the province. At the provincial scale AT proponents see the importance of a consistent approach to how AT is promoted, particularly regarding bicycle infrastructure design standards and network planning. With a vision to creating an interprovincial network like the Blue Route, municipalities need a clear picture of what they can do to develop accessible, safe and attractive AT routes that cross jurisdictions. In the same regard, the Province will require standardized internal direction for supporting AT as part of Provincial roadways responsibilities. It was also noted that, a clear provincial policy on AT might help "de-politicize" the issue at the local level. Supporting active transportation is often perceived as coming at the expense of automobile users, and finding the political backing to break through these perceptions is often a major barrier to achieving projects.

Workshop participants were eager to point out that the Province does not have to reinvent the wheel if it chooses to formalize an AT policy. In regards to bikeways infrastructure design standards, participants

recommended adopting the Transportation Association of Canada's (TAC) Bikeways Traffic Control Guidelines. There are also many Canadian models of Provincial bikeways policies and organizations to draw inspiration from. Many at the workshop now see Quebec and the body Velo Quebec as a leader in the field.

A clear approach to working with communities on AT goals was also high on the list of priorities discussed at the workshop. Community representatives at the workshop value the Province's efforts to engage them in policy decisions, but many are eager to get beyond talking about the issues. The workshop demonstrated that many Nova Scotia communities are ready to start making their communities active transportation friendly, and are in the process of working toward the goals. Many of these places have AT plans in place and want the Province to come to the table with an understanding of what it can do to help them take action on projects. For communities without AT plans, the province can connect them with the information they need to prepare local projects, in addition to supporting them through implementation. Many see the potential Provincial role on interprovincial bikeways as a great opportunity to partner with Municipalities on projects. With each step the province makes toward the network, it can help municipalities implement pieces of their AT plan and it can help communities without plans identify and advance key projects.

Along with taking a hand in coordinating and implementing strategic AT infrastructure projects, participants also saw a greater role for the Province in promoting and nourishing AT culture. People are looking for help growing a "share the road" culture, by educating cyclists and drivers about safe practices and behaviours, and also to normalize the concept of sharing streets. Participants recommended focusing on education and outreach by working in schools and with drivers education programs. Many were also inspired by Halifax's 2012 Switch open street event as a tool for promoting AT in communities. Strong support was voiced for using these events as a Provincial vehicle for building AT culture in communities across Nova Scotia.

## Barriers to Implementing the Network

### Provincial Bicycle Policy

**Issue/Barrier:** Currently there is no overarching Provincial Bicycle Policy that provides guidance as to provincial standards for bicycle

infrastructure design, bicycle network design or bicycle signage standards.

**Action Required:** Develop a Provincial Bicycle Policy to inform the development of standardized approach to Bicycle infrastructure design throughout Nova Scotia that will also support the development of a the “Blue Route”.

### **30km/hour zones**

**Issue/ Barrier:** Municipalities are not currently able to incorporate 30 kilometre/hour zones as part of traffic calming to support an Active Transportation route (cycling, walking) apart from some roads near schools.

**Action Required:** Amend the Prima Facie Speed Limit section of the Motor Vehicle Act to allow for a reduction in maximum speed limit to 30km/hour in identified districts.

### **Bicycle Infrastructure Standards**

**Issue/ Barrier:** Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal does not recognize Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) bikeways guidelines, limiting the options for municipalities to develop safe and standardized bikeways.

**Action Required:** Provincial Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal gazettes the TAC Bikeways Design guidelines, recognizing these bicycle infrastructure standards and treatments as suitable for implementation in Nova Scotia.

### **Bicycle Route Signage Policy**

**Issue / Barrier:** The absence of a provincial bicycle route signage policy is preventing municipalities from implementing bicycle route signage in areas that are under provincial jurisdiction. The lack of a signage policy also makes it difficult for municipalities to install and apply signage in a consistent manner.

**Action Required:** Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) adopt the cycling signage standards in the Bikeway Traffic Control Guidelines for Canada, 2nd Edition as published by the Transportation Association of Canada. Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) develop a bicycle signage policy and schedule of signs based on the Bikeway Traffic Control Guidelines for Canada.

## **Infrastructure Design Constraints**

**Issue/Barrier:** The Motor Vehicle Act requires cars to be parked within 6 inches of the curb. A recent design innovation for Bicycle Lanes allows for the bike lane to be placed on the curb-side of the parking, buffered by the on-street parking. However, the current Motor Vehicle Act would not allow for cars to be parked on the traffic side of the park lane with a bollard or painted line as a marker for drivers.

**Action Required:** Amend the Motor Vehicle Act's definition of curb to include alternatives such as painted lines or bollards in areas with buffered bike lanes.

## **Traffic Authorities**

**Issue/Barrier:** The Motor Vehicle Act does not provide any direction to traffic authorities on their role in promoting sustainable forms of transportation. For example, making decisions to reduce traffic capacity (i.e. right turn lanes at intersections) to allow for continuous bike lanes through intersections. These decisions require traffic authorities to take responsibility in giving priority to sustainable transportation along key corridors.

**Action Required:** Adjust the duties of traffic authorities to include the key goals of the Sustainable Transportation Strategy by amending the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal description of the duties and required skills by Traffic Authorities 86 (2A).

## **Open Street Initiatives**

**Issue/Barrier:** Currently, there is no recognition within the MVA of the concept of Open Street Events, within the parades and processions section of the Act. Without recognizing the broader public benefits of Open Street Events within the MVA it is difficult for communities to gain support for these events.

**Action Required:** Create language to define what open street events are and how they support the goals of STS. Provide direction to traffic authorities to reduce restrictions needed to receive permits for Open Street Events. Create a Provincial Open Streets Policy to encourage municipalities and communities across Nova Scotia to develop local open street initiatives (for e.g. Switch Open Street Sundays).



## Vehicles and Fleets Network

The Vehicles and Fleets network is about getting greater efficiencies from automobiles and freight delivery systems. It recognizes that vehicles are also an important part of the Sustainable Transportation Strategy and strives for creative solutions for increasing their utility and decreasing their impact on the environment and communities. While this approach includes making use of technological advancements, it also involves questioning how we think of and drive personal automobiles and fleets. Ideas like car sharing and ride sharing services are starting to expand the concept of what a vehicle is for, and how it can be used by a community. Fleets may also be used for broadening purposes down the road. As changes in how vehicles are designed and used begin to gain ground, opportunities are arising for the Sustainable Transportation to nurture and generate new ideas.

### Recommendations to Advance the Network

Those concerned with vehicles and fleets are envisioning comprehensive changes to the life and life cycle of a vehicle. Questions like who drives it, how it gets driven, what it carries, how it gets built, where it ends up are all being opened up for debate. These questions are hinting at a cultural shift that goes far beyond thinking of how vehicles get powered. Some participants are working toward a world where everything about vehicles and fleets is rationalized to get the most utility. Even seemingly innocuous ideas like changing our driving habits to reduce emissions are being explored with enthusiasm.

Some of the major changes people want to see involve continuing to expand the idea of what one vehicle can be used for. Car sharing is a service coming from Halifax's private sector that gives people an alternative to car ownership. This type of service helps people organize their lives around sustainable transportation options, without needing a car or a parking spot, by offering them flexibility when they need it. While this service is a private sector endeavor, it is easy to see how it could be used to support the other Sustainable Transportation networks. Ride sharing services approach this idea from another direction by allowing people to essentially share their personal vehicle with others on a trip-by-trip basis. People concerned with getting more out of fleet vehicles are starting to look at pushing current regulations to consider how passenger transports can safely move freight at the same time.

In addition to reviewing how vehicles are used, embracing technology and right-sizing fleets was an important part of the conversation.

Participants see much ground to be gained in exploring both the logistics of fleet management and encouraging the use of more efficient vehicles that maximize their capacity. In general a shift toward downsizing vehicles where possible was advocated.

Participants who discussed vehicles and fleets want the Province to take a hand in encouraging a cultural shift toward more sustainable vehicles and fleets. They are looking to the Province to promote the idea of adaptive use and reuse of vehicles to the public and industry. Suggested avenues for bringing about change include: educating the public and industry; providing incentives and/or disincentives to promote efficiency; promoting the early adoption of technology; and supporting organizations that encourage a cultural shift in the way Nova Scotian's use vehicles, like car share and ride share providers. In a broader sense, the participants want the province to promote a cultural shift in the use of vehicles and fleets. They recommend mandating a provincial organization advised by industry stakeholders with this responsibility. Reviewing current regulations and policies to ensure they align with updated goals should be within the scope of such a mandate. As stakeholders see the need for increased flexibility in the way vehicles and fleets are used, they anticipate a need for increasing the flexibility of the regulations and policies that govern them.

### Barriers to Implementing the Network

There are currently no standards governing electric vehicles, natural gas vehicles, or alternative fuels. Another barrier identified is the lack of promotion of efficient driving techniques in driver education/licensing standards. There is also a need to improve flexibility of vehicle regulation, ex: crash and emission light standards as inhibitors to access the most appropriate vehicles.

### Freight and Passengers

**Issue/Barrier:** Workshop Participants stated that public and community transit systems were not currently allowed to carry both freight and passengers. Participants referenced that allowing for these systems to also transport parcels would enhance the viability and sustainability of transportation.

**Action Required:** Need further clarification on this barrier, might be part of the service exchange agreement. Where is separation from goods and people needed.

## Community Engagement Network

The community engagement network represents the Province's approach to working with different partners across Nova Scotia to advance the goals of the Sustainable Transportation Strategy. The Province was looking for ideas on how best to engage and support municipalities, NGOs and the private sector to help them improve transportation options.

### Recommendations to Advance the Network

The response to these questions was emphatic: enough talk, lets make something happen. Nova Scotian communities want the province to start basing its engagement on sustainable transportation in partnerships to implement projects and programs. They want to see results on the ground instead of on paper. Yet while communities are interested in immediate action they also want the province to provide them with an action plan. Communities and other stakeholders need a better understanding of what their responsibilities will or could be, and clearer expectations of what to expect in terms of Provincial support. Immediate actions must work toward a clear long-term vision to assure of the value of their investments.

Out of discussions on community engagement came several key ingredients participants are looking for in a successful action-based engagement strategy around transportation. High on the list is outlining goals, targets, roles and responsibilities. Communities want to understand the policy direction, be able to measure progress toward it, and be assured that their investments will achieve results. They also need to know what the province will do to provide stable support for its sustainable transportation policies so they can plan accordingly. As the Province sets goals and outlines responsibilities, communities are looking to the province to gather the information needed to establish baselines and measure progress.

Another key ingredient is to establish a results-based model for engagement. Participants want engagement processes to become part of provincial work plans and budgets. They want the province to consult when a project has the potential to enhance sustainable transportation options. This type of model allows communities to lead engagement at the local level, and to have their efforts backed by provincial support. For example, when provincial roads are planned in their jurisdiction, municipalities want to have an opportunity to leverage provincial infrastructure investments to support the implementation of local AT

plans and project already supported by the community.

A final message about engagement on sustainable transportation is to utilize existing networks, organizations and resources for outreach. Sustainable transportation is a broad topic that connects to many areas of community development where people are already working and connected to the community. Examples included school boards, MPALs and community health boards, AT committees, school boards, newcomer services, YMCA's and the Heart & Stroke Foundation. By working closely with these groups, the province can avoid over consultation and the need to relearn what local groups have already established.

### **Connecting the Networks**

One of the comments recorded over the two day session said, "beware of separating the topics; [it] is about how all networks form a total network". As another participant said, "Sustainable transportation makes you think bigger." This idea that sustainable transportation must be about big picture thinking and making connections was very prominent in workshop discussions. Results will come when many solutions work toward the same goal: giving people greater transportation choice, and better options. As long as the big picture stays in mind, each new transportation alternative that Nova Scotia is able to provide its residents will multiply the effectiveness of others. Workshop participants asked the Province to take some responsibility for the big picture and coordinating comprehensive change. Leadership, vision, goals and targets are ideas inherent in how municipalities, NGOs, communities and businesses want the province to guide big picture thinking.

One of the strongest concepts coming out of the workshop that can give shape to a provincial sustainable transportation strategy is around the idea of connecting networks. Participants describe a transportation framework where an interprovincial transportation spine connects at hubs to regional and local transportation networks. By connecting networks, each piece can be optimized for its unique scale, but when they are linked together at hub points they create a system that serves the entire province. A key principle of this linked network is that it focuses on centres or hubs. Without local and regional centres to connect to, networks of different scales will not be able to function efficiently. In the same sense, without a well functioning spine, each local network will struggle to contribute to a larger provincial transportation system.

Adding a multi-modal approach will further strengthen the framework, so that a person can imagine transferring seamlessly from community transit to a first rate bicycle network or from a personal vehicle to a public transit system.

### **Bringing about a culture shift**

Nova Scotia's Vision toward sustainable transportation relies as much in a cultural shift as it does in infrastructure and service. With the automobile so engrained in North American society, everybody, from individuals to government leaders, need to think differently to bring about major changes. With its connection to all communities, and so many different parts of society, participants look to the Province to promote this cultural shift through marketing, promotion and education. Investment in infrastructure and programs must be promoted so people are encouraged to change. Participants are looking for the message coming from the Province to be strong, clearly communicating both the importance of changing ways to the future of the Province, but also the benefits that it can bring to individuals and communities. If real changes, like shifts in the modal share, decreased greenhouse gas emissions, and the development of truly accessible communities, are going to happen communities across Nova Scotia will need to see a new approach to transportation as part of their future. Transportation must be integrated with ideas about health care, education and the economy, as much as it is with the environment.

## Appendix: Case Studies

### Blue Route

#### *Background*

Bicycle Nova Scotia has been working to advance the concept of the Blue Route for the past six years (double check). The vision of the Blue Route is to develop a province-wide network of bikeways, inspired by the hugely successful Route Verte provincial bikeways of Quebec. With active transportation being considered as a pillar of the Province's Sustainable Transportation Strategy, the Blue Route may have a valuable role to play in the future of Nova Scotia's transportation network.

The Blue Route aspires to create a clear continuous route for cyclists by connecting suitable pieces of bikeways infrastructure throughout the province. Urban and rural bikeways through downtowns and along provincial will all be needed. Although a province wide bikeways network may sound far off, many potential pieces of this network exist today. In several municipalities, AT plans already call for new and improved pieces of local and regional networks. The Blue Route could play a key role in realizing the goals of these AT plans. Calculated infrastructure investment will be needed, but much of the effort required will be understanding and coordinating what exists, what is already planned and what may be built in the future. Clear consistent bikeways policies based on best practices will be essential to guide the way.

#### *Likely requirements of advancing the Blue Route:*

- Ensuring the Blue Route will be clearly marked, comfortable and safe to use
  - o Consistent municipal and provincial bikeways policies
  - o Province wide policy and supporting legislation based on best practices
    - Signage, bikeways. (1m rule is an existing local example of the type of supporting policy needed)
- Mapping the network
  - o An inventory of existing of infrastructure
  - o An inventory of planned infrastructure (AT plans and Trails Plans)
  - o Communication amongst the different partners that will be involved in implementation
- Implementing the network
  - o Infrastructure investment
    - Signage



- Shoulder paving

- o Collaboration between the Province and Municipalities (The Blue Route will cross jurisdictional boundaries)

*Guiding Questions*

Each group will have a host, a participant familiar with the project being discussed and a note taker these two will work to answer the guiding question:

- What are/were the barriers, successes and broad lessons learned?
- Would the STS help advance the project? What are the gaps in the STS?
- How could STS help to develop standards for provincial bike facilities?
- How could STS support the coordination of Blue Route in different jurisdictions?



## HRM North-South Cycling Routes

### *Background*

- In 2006, Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) develops an Active Transportation (AT) Plan as one of the key functional plans of the Regional Planning Strategy, within this plan document there is a preliminary bicycle network
- Over the last 6 years implementation of AT functional plan HRM has started with the development of bicycle facilities (on and off-street) on the peninsula.
- These facilities currently amount to a small fragmented network of facilities on the peninsula
- In 2010 the Halifax Cycling Coalition submitted a petition with approximately 1500 signatures in support of “the installation of an active transportation corridor in the form of a bike lane that connects South End Halifax to the North End.”
- Regional council directed staff to investigate the options for a north-south bicycle route.
- In 2012 HRM began public consultation gaining input on the options for a north-south corridor.
- Three key corridors have been identified (Agricola, Windsor, Local Bikeways) with different strengths and weaknesses based on the criteria identified by HRM staff and public feedback.

### *Implications for Sustainable Transportation Strategy*

- HRM is currently working to evaluate the three corridors and develop a design that they can present to Regional council.
- It is important to note that this project represents the first high-profile project for HRM in developing bicycle facilities on the peninsula.
- The installation of a bike lane on the Windsor and Agricola corridors would require elimination of on street parking on one or in some cases both sides.
- HRM policy is that in these cases, tradeoffs need to be made to balance the desire to accommodate active transportation and the need to ensure parking for businesses and residents.
- The AT plan must provide a central spine for the bicycle network and allow for a design that prioritizes bicycles.

### *Opportunities for Sustainable Transportation Strategy*

- Lack of consensus on what it means to develop a cycling priority route from a transportation perspective.
- Current Transportation Association Canada Bikeway



- guidelines not currently recognized in the province.
- Current Transportation Authority has concerns with loss of turning lanes to allow for bike lanes to go through the intersections.
  - Current Motor vehicle act does not allow for several design options: bike boxes, buffered bike lanes, local street bikeways (30km/h zone), bicycle signals.
  - Currently difficult to develop a design that effectively provides priority to cyclists and will encourage new cyclists (8 to 80).

### *Guiding Questions*

Each group will have a host, a participant familiar with the project being discussed and a note taker these two will work to answer the guiding question:

- What are/were the barriers, successes and broad lessons learned?
- Would the STS help advance the project? If not, what are the gaps?
- How could the STS adjust the role of transportation authority to account for sustainable transportation?
- How could STS further clarify what a bicycle priority route means for traffic, engineering, planning, residents and business?
- What are the opportunities to see this as a multi-modal opportunity?
- How could collaboration improve public and political support for this project?

## Municipality of the District of Lunenburg: Citizens for Public Transit

### *Background*

- o Citizens for Public Transit (CPT) was formed in 2006 to address the Municipality's need for a fixed route public transit service.
- o In 2009 the HDR | iTRANS project team completed a Public Transit Feasibility Study for the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, funded by NS - TRIP
- o The Public Transit Services evaluated were designed to serve the 1,800 km<sup>2</sup> District of Lunenburg, which includes the Town of Bridgewater, Town of Lunenburg, Town of Mahone Bay and several smaller communities.
- o The district is a mixture of urban and rural settlements with large distances in between, an area with diverse transit needs and servicing challenges.
- o Ultimately four service models were seriously considered. All four of these were a combination of fixed route service types using a variety of different vehicle and scheduling options including peak time routes and non-work commute time feeder routes. Door to door service was not evaluated as a primary option.
- o Three governance models were also considered: Municipally owned and operated, Municipally owned and privately operated, and privately owned and operated.
- o HDR | iTRANS recommendations were to develop a mixed network, with peak time routes servicing the core region of Mahone Bay, Lunenburg and Bridgewater combined with a throughout day feeder route connecting the core area.
- HDR | iTRANS recommended a municipally owned / privately operated service if capital funding could be secured, or a privately owned and operated service if capital funding was unavailable.
- o In response to the report, CPT have developed a network recommendation
- o The Districts have formed an advisory Joint Transportation Committee advance the goals of providing a fixed route public transit service.

*How can the experience of MODOL inform the Sustainable Transportation Strategy?*

Guiding Questions:

- o What are the major barriers in the way of MODOL implementing a public transit service?
- o Are there service models or community transit concepts yet to be tested that could assist Nova Scotia Municipalities?
- o What can the Sustainable Transportation Study do to assist municipalities like MODOL to achieve Public Transit Goals?
- o How well do Service Nova Scotia's community transit programs, Community Transit Assistance Program (CTAP), Nova Scotia Transit Research Incentive Program (NS-TRIP), and Accessible Transit Assistance Program (ATAP) meet the needs of Nova Scotia communities? Is there anything in this model that needs to be changed?

*Something to consider:*

After much research and consultation, Community Transit Nova Scotia presented the following four recommendations to advance community transit:

- o Provincial Vision and Strategic Plan for community transit
- o Analysis of Provincial Government spending on client transportation
- o A re-examination of Federal Gas Tax Funding directed to municipalities
- o A Community Transit Secretariat.

*Guiding Questions*

- What are/were the barriers, successes and broad lessons learned?
- Would the STS help advance the project? What are the gaps in the STS?
- How could STS help to develop a broader planning network or structure for community transit?

## Appendix: Agenda

### A Two-day Interactive Workshop

To support the development of the forthcoming Provincial Sustainable Transportation Strategy (Strategy), we invite you to attend the second stage of the Transportation Solutions Workshops. This two-day workshop will bring together individuals and organizations inside and outside of government to review the outcomes of the January 2012 Transportation Solutions Workshop and provide an opportunity for Provincial staff to present the draft framework of the forthcoming Strategy. This session will allow key stakeholders to review and discuss proposed policies related to the sustainable movement of people.

Over the course of the two days participants will be engaged in testing the draft Strategy through a review of lessons learned from a variety of sustainable transportation-related projects recently implemented or in development across the province. Day two of the workshop will build on the outcomes of day one, so you are encouraged to attend both days if possible.

### Tuesday, September 11, 2012 - Workshop Agenda

#### WORKSHOP GOALS (Day 1)

- Understand the draft Sustainable Transportation Strategy (STS)
- Gather feedback and advice on how to strengthen the draft STS
- Test the draft STS using real world examples of sustainable transportation projects

9:00 am - 9:30 am

#### **Welcome and introductions**

- Welcome and introductions
- Goals of the workshop
- Overview of the day
- Activity: participants introduce themselves to others at their table and discuss expectations for the two days (10 min)

9:30 am - 10:50 am

#### **Plenary presentation**

- Review outcomes of January 2012 Sustainable Transportation Solutions Workshop
- Review draft STS policy directions, including five "Sustainable Transportation Networks"

10:50 am - 11:00 am      **BREAK**

11:00 am - 11:20 am      **Breakout groups**

- Small groups discuss initial thoughts on draft STS (What are the strengths? What's missing?)

11:20 am - 11:45 am      **Report back**

- Each group is invited to briefly present the highlights of their discussion

11:45 am - 12:00 pm      **Introduction to breakout group work  
(testing the draft STS)**

- Small groups will test draft STS through review of lessons learned from sustainable transportation projects recently implemented or under development from across the province
- Each group will have a host (a participant familiar with the project), a facilitator and a note taker
- *Guiding questions:* what are/were the barriers, successes and broad lessons learned? Would the STS help advance the project? If not, what are the gaps? Would the draft STS reinforce past successes?

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm      **LUNCH**

Case studies for breakout group work

- Blue Route (community driven, regional AT)
- North-South Cycling Connector on Halifax peninsula (cycling infrastructure in urban environment)
- Provincial public transit network (implications of recently announced closure of Acadian Lines)
- Community transit project (Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Towns of Bridgewater, Lunenburg, and Mahone Bay public transit project)
- Penhorn Mall redevelopment and Portland Street high-frequency transit corridor, HRM (integration of land-use planning and transportation planning)

Participants will have the opportunity to host a discussion about other relevant projects not listed above during the second breakout session

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm      **Breakout groups**

- Small groups explore the case studies (i.e., one case study per group)

2:00 pm - 2:15 pm                    **BREAK**

- Group hosts/facilitators/note takers consolidate what they heard

2:15 pm - 3:15 pm                    Breakout groups

- Small groups explore the case studies (i.e., one case study per group)

3:15 pm - 3:30 pm                    **BREAK**

- Group hosts/facilitators/note takers consolidate what they heard

3:30 pm - 4:15 pm                    Report back

- Small groups reports back to the whole group  
(one brief presentation of the highlights for each project case study)

4:15 pm - 4:30 pm                    Conclusion

- Final thoughts from the Cities & Environment Unit

## Wednesday, September 12, 2012 - Workshop Agenda

### WORKSHOP GOALS (Day 2)

- Fine tune the draft Sustainable Transportation Strategy (STS)
- Understand the appropriate tools to implement the five Sustainable Transportation Networks
- Identify immediate next steps to advance each of the five Sustainable Transportation Networks
- Identify roles and responsibilities of Province, Municipalities, NGOs and communities to implement the STS

### 9:00 am - 9:30 am                    **Welcome and introductions**

- Welcome and introductions
- Goals of the workshop
- Overview of the day
- Review outcomes of Day 1
- Introduction to breakout group work

### 9:30 am - 10:30 am                **Breakout groups (refining the draft STS)**

- Small groups will review each of the five Sustainable Transportation Networks in detail
- One table, or "station," for each of the five Networks:
  1. Active Transportation
  2. Public/Community Transit
  3. Urban and Rural Planning
  4. Vehicles and Fleets
  5. Community Engagement
- Display panels from Day 1 will inform the discussion
- A station host will stay at each table while other participants rotate through other tables
- *Guiding questions:* What is missing or needs to be changed? How can the Province, Municipalities, NGOs and communities collaborate to implement each Network? What are the roles, responsibilities and decision-making processes? What immediate action is needed to make a difference for each Network?

- 10:30 am - 10:45 am      **BREAK**
- Station hosts consolidate what they heard
- 10:45 am - 12:00 pm      **Breakout groups**
- Participants move to another station
- 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm      **LUNCH**
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm      **Breakout groups**
- Participants move to another station
- 2:00 pm - 2:15 pm      **BREAK**
- Station hosts consolidate what they heard
- 2:15 pm - 3:30 pm      **Report back and whole group discussion**
- Station hosts report back to whole group
- 3:30 pm - 3:45 pm      **Breakout groups**
- Each group reflects on expectations discussed on day 1
- 3:45 pm - 4:00 pm      **Conclusion and next steps**
- Final thoughts from the Province and Cities & Environment Unit



