



Halifax Harbour Bridges

Halifax Harbour Bridges

Business Plan for Fiscal 2021-2022

Message from the Chair of the Board and the CEO

On behalf of the board of commissioners and management we are pleased to present the 2021 - 2022 business plan for Halifax Harbour Bridges (HHB).

The 2021/22 fiscal year will be significant for HHB as we begin to implement a 10-year, rehabilitation and maintenance plan (capital plan). This plan, estimated to cost more than \$280 million is necessary to ensure the bridges are well maintained and operational for the safety and convenience of the travelling public.

To help fund this capital plan HHB has made an application to the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (NSUARB) for a toll increase, the first request in a decade.

HHB is asking NSUARB's approval to increase the tolls 25 per cent for all classes of vehicles. The cost for regular passenger vehicles using MACPASS would go from \$.80 to \$1 and from \$1 to \$1.25 for cash customers. The NSUARB will hold hearings in June 2021 and, if approved, the increase is expected to come into effect January 2022.

The ongoing pandemic continues to impact the number of crossings on the bridges and corresponding toll revenue. Traffic volumes between April 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 decreased by 24.5 per cent and we project that traffic volumes will not return to pre-pandemic volumes until 2024.

We invite you to read about the projects that will be implemented this year in this business plan which will help us achieve the mission of providing safe, efficient and reliable cross harbour transportation infrastructure in a cost effective manner.

Respectfully submitted,



Vicki Harnish
Chair of the Board of Commissioners



Steve Snider
General Manager and CEO

Mandate

The Halifax Dartmouth Bridge Commission, operating as Halifax Harbour Bridges or HHB was created in 1950 by a statute of the Province of Nova Scotia and now operates under a statute proclaimed in 2005 and amended in 2010. In accordance with Section 27 of the Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission Act: 27 (1) With the approval of the Governor in Council, the Commission may construct, maintain and operate a transportation project across the Halifax Harbour and the North West Arm, or either of them.

The objectives of HHB are to:

- (a) Maintain and operate the bridges and any other transportation project authorized by Section 27 of the Act; and
- (b) Assess, market, license, implement, provide, maintain and integrate such electronic collection systems as are approved by the Governor in Council.

The organization operates and maintains two toll bridges that span Halifax harbour: the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge and the A. Murray MacKay Bridge.

HHB is governed by a board of commissioners consisting of nine commissioners of which five are appointed by the province of Nova Scotia and four are appointed by Halifax Regional Municipality.

The board of commissioners provides effective stewardship for the organization by ensuring the affairs of HHB are administered effectively and are based on sound business practices in accordance with HHB objectives.

Mission

To provide safe, efficient and reliable cross harbour transportation infrastructure in a cost effective manner.

Vision

To be recognized as world class for providing innovative transportation solutions.

Core Values

Safety of employees and bridge users is our fundamental focus and a shared responsibility.

Stewardship of our assets and the environment is our corporate and social responsibility.

Respect means acting with professionalism, integrity and accountability.

Engagement with employees, customers and partners helps us achieve our mission.

Teamwork is supporting employee growth and building on each other's strengths.

Strategic plan

In 2020 the board of commissioners approved HHB's 2020 – 2025 strategic plan.

Goal 1: Improve safety, efficiency and environmental stewardship in operations and maintenance

Strategies:

- Create a work plan to address toll plaza congestion and safety issues (by 2024)
- Improve organizational performance, including workplace safety, through data collection and analysis.
- Extend the life of the bridges through ongoing inspection, planning and investment
- HHB environmental strategies guide operations and maintenance and are used to evaluate projects for impact and stewardship

2021/22 actions

- Implement the first phase of a multi-phase project to replace the legacy tolling system, which is 13 years old, with a modern system so HHB can provide enhanced customer experience
- Continue rehabilitation of elements on the Macdonald Bridge that were not replaced as part of the Big Lift including: concrete repairs, steel and paint repairs and the replacement of approach span bearings.
- Complete a life cycle inventory for the bridge components for all structures
- Revise HHB's environmental action plan and framework and embed the environmental commitment into organizational culture.

Goal 2: Provide customer value through seamless, reliable and safe bridge crossings

Strategies:

- Optimize lane closures by coordinating maintenance efforts
- Use techniques and materials that allow the maximization of the life cycle of repairs
- Utilize technology to detect collisions to resolve incidents more quickly
- Engage customers to enhance communication strategies to keep customers informed about the bridges.

2021/22 actions

- Develop an integrated lane/bridge closure calendar for 2021 and maximize the work taking place with each closure.
- Expand the use of traffic cameras and analyze where incidents occur to minimize disruption caused by traffic incidents
- Enhance communications to increase engagement, understanding and support of bridge operations and maintenance by ensuring all stakeholders are regularly informed about what is taking place at HHB

Goal 3: Demonstrate financial sustainability

Strategies

- Toll revenue supports the wise use of capital and operating resources
- Enhanced asset management plan reflects the age of the structures
- Relevant and cost-effective technology is utilized in all HHB operations and bridge maintenance

2021/22 actions

- Implement a toll increase to fund HHB's 10-year capital, rehabilitation and maintenance plan and related borrowings to ensure the bridges are well maintained and operational for the safety and convenience of the travelling public.
- Develop and implement an Asset Management Plan (AMP) for the MacKay Bridge
- Develop and implement a Bridge Information Model Management System (BIMMS) for the Macdonald Bridge. This system provides 3D access in one location to all critical information (inspection reports, drawing, photos, repair history, bridge element information and condition ratings).

Goal 4: Create a workplace where employees thrive

Strategies

- Develop and monitor an inventory to track alignment of employee skills with workforce needs, identifying gaps for training, development or recruitment of needed skills
- Promote diversity of the workforce by attracting, developing, and retaining skilled people reflective of the communities we serve in Nova Scotia
- HHB policies support a culture of employee health, wellness, safety, and engagement

2021/22 actions

- Implement an equity diversity & inclusion strategy and gain cultural competency and knowledge.
- Implement a human resources information system

Goal 5: Establish a culture and practice of innovation

Strategies

- HHB maintains a practice of looking to industry and global leaders for world class bridge operations, maintenance and tolling innovations
- Strengthen and leverage partnership with the city, province and community stakeholders as well as industry
- Culture change, changes in technology and in customer practices are supported with change management planning and strategies

2021/22 actions

- Explore formal MOU with bridge owners/operators around North America to share knowledge

& experience with issues, challenges and opportunities

Performance measures

To measure HHB's performance against its mission and the priorities planned for the coming fiscal year, HHB plans to undertake the following:

- Rate customer satisfaction through surveys for maintenance, safety, service and value for tolls paid.
- Measure maintenance performance by comparing completed repair projects in the current year against the high and medium priority repair items identified in inspection reports.
- Use road traffic statistics to measure the effectiveness of enhanced operational activities.
- Measure financial results against annual operating and capital budgets.
- Measure the extent to which priority projects have advanced.

Financial Summary

	2020-2021 Budget	2020-2021 Forecast	2021-2022 Budget
Revenue	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
Toll revenue	32,565	25,284	30,099
Interest income	401	264	157
Other income	579	436	319
Total revenue	33,545	25,984	30,575
Expenses			
Administration	3,035	2,852	3,123
Operating	4,666	4,509	4,904
Maintenance	4,878	4,500	3,761
Amortization	9,221	9,129	9,258
Debt servicing	4,186	4,238	4,089
Loss (profit) on disposal of property, plant & equip.	-	-	-
Total expenses	25,986	25,228	25,135
Net operating and comprehensive income	7,559	756	5,440