

November 7, 2023

Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce
Sherry Martell, Executive Director
105B Walker Street
Truro, NS
B2N4B1

Dear Ms. Martell,

Thank you for your correspondence of October 23, 2023 to our Minister, the Honourable Kim Masland, regarding the ongoing Bridge Rehabilitation Project at Salmon River Bridge located on Highway 102 northbound lanes in the Truro area. I have been asked to review your concern and respond to you directly on behalf of Public Works Minister, Kim Masland.

We appreciate you bringing to our attention the economic impacts that the businesses on Robie Street have faced during this project.

The rehabilitation of the Salmon River Bridge was tendered in the spring of 2022 as a two-year project. The first year, the summer of 2022, was spent on the structural upgrades on the underside of the deck. Year two, the summer of 2023, the work continues on the topside of the deck focusing on deck, railing and repaving. The project is currently under budget and has a November 25 completion date.

During the design phase, the Department reviewed the traffic impacts that a project of this magnitude would have on the surrounding area. We were faced with many constraints, such as, safety, traffic congestion, delays, schedule, and overall flow of traffic on Highway 102. Our core focus was on public safety and keeping traffic flowing on Highway 102. We made a difficult decision to close the Robie Street on-ramp during periods of peak traffic volume as this clearly reduced congestion at the merge point for the bridge crossing. We regret that this temporary measure has have a negative impact on surrounding businesses during and the weekend and adjacent high traffic days.

Prior to tendering this project, the Department explored many alternative options to keep the project on schedule. The following items were included in the contract to encourage an expedited project execution: a liquidated damages clause for late completion, a lane rental clause and a bonus clause for completing a portion of the work ahead of schedule.

The Department will in the future consider how each of our projects affect the surrounding area and make every effort to balance the impacts of these improvements on the business community. We look forward to discussing future projects with the Chamber of Commerce.

Should you have any further concerns related to this construction project, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly. I can be contacted at 902-890-4935.

Thank you again for bringing your concern to the attention of the Department of Public Works.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kimberly MacPherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and a stylized "M".

Kimberly MacPherson, P. Eng.
District Bridge Engineer

c: CorrespondencePW@novascotia.ca
Bill Mills, Mayor, Town of Truro
Christine Blair, Mayor, Municipality of the County of Colchester
George Lloy, Mayor, Town of Stewiacke
Dave Ritcey, MLA, Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River
Tom Taggart, MLA, Colchester North
Larry Harrison, MLA, Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley
Dr. Stephen Ellis, MP, Cumberland-Colchester
Troy Webb, District Director, Northern
Chris Verge, Area Manager, Colchester