

Newly twinned Highway 101 opens to traffic

By Lynne Wells
Contributing Writer

Construction crews are fine-tuning Highway 101 between Mount Uniacke and Ellershouse, Nova Scotia. The newly twinned section of Highway 101 is open to four lanes of traffic, but construction is ongoing in spots. Motorists are asked to use caution and the speed limit will remain at 80 km/h in some areas until all work is complete.

"We're meeting our commitments to the people of Nova Scotia," says Ron Russell, Nova Scotia's minister of Transportation and Public Works. "We're making our province stronger, our roads

safer and we're increasing the opportunities for people and their businesses to prosper."

The new section of twinned highway stretches 21 kilometres, from Mount Uniacke at Exit 3 to Ellershouse near Exit 4. An official opening will be held in late November.

Part of the highway, about 11 kilometres, is surfaced in concrete, the rest in asphalt.

Crews are installing guardrails, putting up signs, completing access roads and doing general site cleanup.

The Highway 101 twinning project is part of a cost-shared highways agreement with the federal government. Cost of the project is about

\$33 million, with the concrete section comprising about \$6.5 million of the total cost.

The province and federal government are also moving forward with the next phase of twinning on Highway 101.

The next step is to twin 24 kilometres of highway in Hants and Kings counties, from St. Croix at Exit 4, to Wentworth Road, Exit 5A; and Falmouth, west of Exit 7 to Avonport, east of Exit 9. There will also be three interchanges built west of Digby, Nova Scotia. Work on these new projects is scheduled to begin in 2004.

Concrete paving in-progress on Highway 101.



NS DoT planning on continuation of twinning program for well-travelled Highway 101

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The Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Public Works is continuing with plans to upgrade and twin Highway 101 now that Phase 2 (Mount Uniacke to Ellershouse) is almost complete. Planning work is also ongoing for Phases 3 and 4, encompassing Highway 101 from Ellershouse to Avonport. This section of Highway 101 is currently a two lane, 100 Series controlled access highway.

Traffic volumes have been increasing steadily over the past several years on Highway 101. They currently range from 11,000 to 13,000 vehicles per day and are at the point where twinning is an appropriate measure for increasing highway service



A 10.9 km stretch of Highway 101 between Mt. Uniacke and Windsor was the first PCC paving project in N.S. since 1994. The successful bidder was Demix Construction Ltd. of Longueuil, QC. The paving machine placed and finished two lane-widths of more than nine metres, plus installation of epoxy-coated dowel bars, in one pass. The project required 28,000 m³ of concrete, installed at an average rate of 2,000 m³/day to meet the completion date. The portable, high-volume central mix concrete plant and the paving machine were subcontracted to Dufferin Construction Company, Ottawa, ON. Both Demix and Dufferin are sister companies to St. Lawrence Cement Inc., which supplied approximately 10,000 tonnes (660 tonnes/day) of cement powder.

The proposed twinned highway will have a depressed grassed median and gentle shoulders similar to the existing twinned sec-

tion of Highway 101 east of Mount Uniacke. Phase 3 begins at the existing section of twinned highway at Ellershouse near Exit 4 and ends in Windsor at Exit 6.

Phase 4 continues westerly from the Town of Windsor to the end of the existing section of twinning at Avonport near Exit 9.

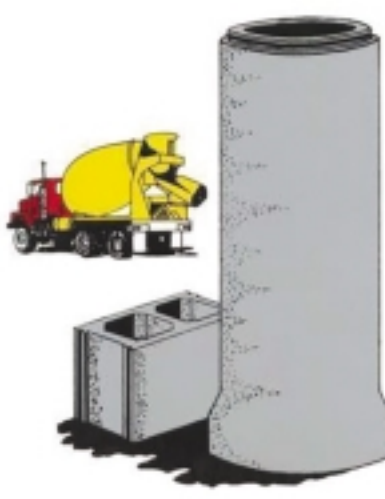
Starting at the Ellershouse end, the new lanes will be constructed on the north side of the existing highway. The new twinning will transition to the south side approximately two kilometres west of the Falmouth Connector (Exit 7) for the remainder of the project.

Modifications are planned for several interchanges. The Wentworth Road (Exit 5A) and Falmouth (Exit 7) interchanges will be modified to a typical diamond configuration. The Hantsport interchange (Exit 8) will maintain the current configuration, but will be rebuilt to reflect proper design standards. The Ben Jackson Road intersection (Exit 8A) will be eliminated and a new service road constructed on the south side of Highway 101 from Ben Jackson Road to West Brooklyn Road. The Avonport interchange (Exit 9) will be modified to more closely resemble a typical diamond configuration.

Careful planning and design measures along with accepted construction techniques will ensure that environmental impacts from activities such as road construction in close proximity to developed areas, ponds and streams, widening of the Windsor Causeway, and disruption of highly erodable strata are minimized.

The estimated cost of twinning the 28 kilometres of Phases 3 and 4 is \$45 million. Highway 101 is part of the National Highway System making it eligible for federal cost sharing (normally on a 50/50 basis).

Some design work was conducted in the past for Phases 3 and 4, but the majority of the work remains outstanding, including the completion of the roadway, structure and interchange modification designs, along with the necessary property purchases and environmental mitigation plans. The province says it is proceeding on a schedule that will result in Phases 3 and 4 being ready for construction by the winter of 2004.



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