Link Nova Scotia

2025-26 Accountability Report

Table of Contents

Accountability Statement 3

Message from the Deputy Minister 4

About Link Nova Scotia 5

Our Core Partners 5

Measuring Performance 6

- Regional Transportation Plan 6
- Regional Transportation System 7
- Organization 8

Financial Results 10

Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act 11

Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of Link Nova Scotia for the year ended March 31, 2026, is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting on outcomes against the Link Nova Scotia Business Plan for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2026. Reporting on Link Nova Scotia's outcomes necessarily includes management estimates, judgments, and opinions.

We acknowledge that this Accountability Report is the responsibility of Link Nova Scotia management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Link Nova Scotia 2025-26 Business Plan.

Original Signed by

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Honourable Fred Tilley
Minister
Department of Public Works

Original Signed by

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Peter Hackett, P. Eng
Deputy Minister
Link Nova Scotia

Message from the Deputy Minister

The 2025-26 Accountability Report looks back on a year that transformed our organization. Following legislative amendments introduced through Bill 24, the former Joint Regional Transportation Agency became Link Nova Scotia. Along with a new name, the amended legislation provided Link Nova Scotia with an expanded mandate; the ability to own, operate, and fund transportation assets; and a province-wide scope that reflects our role in planning for the future of the transportation system in the Halifax region and beyond.

The most significant milestone from this year was the release of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The first of its kind in Atlantic Canada, the RTP includes 39 recommended actions, focused on addressing the transportation challenges of today while preparing the region for future growth. Since its release, Link Nova Scotia has begun advancing several actions along with short-term initiatives that are aimed at improving reliability, managing congestion, and supporting the movement of people and goods across the region.

The progress made in 2025–26 reflects the dedication of Link Nova Scotia staff and the strength of our partnerships. While much of the work so far has been focused on exploration and feasibility, it will help ensure that as we move from planning to implementation, we do so in an evidence-based, cost-effective, and collaborative way. I look forward to continuing this work with our partners as we help build a transportation system that enables growth, improves access to jobs, education, and health care, and better connects communities across the province.

Original Signed by

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Peter Hackett, P. Eng
Deputy Minister
Link Nova Scotia

About Link Nova Scotia

Link Nova Scotia (Link) is a provincial Crown corporation responsible for long-term transportation planning in Nova Scotia and the implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Link reports to the Minister of Public Works.

Our Core Partners

Our Core Partners make up the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Each Core Partner owns, operates, or funds transportation in the region, and have existing plans, strategies, and studies that are important to, dependant on, or that will inform the RTP. Progress on existing initiatives and advancing new projects is key to building momentum and addressing current transportation issues.

Our Core Partners include:

- Nova Scotia Department of Public Works
- Halifax Regional Municipality
- Halifax Harbour Bridges
- Halifax Port Authority
- Halifax International Airport Authority
- Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Measuring Performance

Regional Transportation Plan

Initiatives that support planning, implementation, and funding of actions identified in the RTP.

Initiative	Status	Details
Progress on priority recommendations	In progress	Of the 39 actions included in the RTP, 16 were identified as priority recommendations and are the key areas of focus for Link Nova Scotia and its Core Partners over the next 10 years. Following the release of the RTP in August 2025, Link initiated several of the priority recommendations. Some of the highlights from this year include: • Initiating planning and preliminary design work for the Highway 102 corridor between Exits 0 and 4C • Procuring a consultant to conduct the Halifax Peninsula core street and access corridor review • Kicking off the first phase of a passenger rail feasibility study
Technology and data	In progress	The Regional Transportation Model, co-managed with Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), received ongoing improvements throughout the year and continued to provide important insights into travel behaviour in the region and the impact of proposed projects. The Canadian Survey on Everyday Travel (CSET), conducted by Statistics Canada, is currently underway. Link and HRM have partnered to expand the CSET survey in the Halifax area. This will give both organizations a clearer picture of how people travel in HRM and the RTP area, creating a strong baseline that can be compared with travel patterns across the country. The data will also be used to build the next version of the Regional Transportation Model, along with 2026 Census data. To further improve our understanding of where and how people are moving in the region, Link is piloting a one-year

Technology and data cont'd		subscription to the SMATS iNode data platform. The platform provides province-wide, real-time and historical transportation data, including traffic volume estimates, travel patterns, and travel times. This licence is shared with our Core Partners to ensure all participating organizations have access to a high level of data and to support broader collaboration amongst Link and its partners.

Regional Transportation System

Initiatives that support, strengthen, or improve the regional transportation system.

Initiative	Status	Details
Passenger rail feasibility study	In progress	The first phase of a passenger rail feasibility study is currently underway to identify and evaluate potential corridors for passenger rail service and understand how the service could complement the broader regional transportation system over the long term.
Highway 102 enhancements	In progress	In partnership with the Department of Public Works (DPW), Link released a request for proposals for a transportation needs assessment and functional design for the Highway 102 corridor between Exits 0 and 4C, the first major step in the project. The RFP was released in October 2025 and awarded in February 2026. As a short-term improvement measure, DPW also completed upgrades at Exit 3 on Highway 102 in December 2025 to improve safety and increase capacity, with further improvements planned for summer 2026.
Permanent student transit pass program	Incomplete	The Student Transit Pass program ran through 2025/26.

Federal transit funding	In progress	Nova Scotia was invited to apply for the Metro-Region Agreement (MRA) stream of the Canada Public Transit Fund (CPTF) to support key transit and active transportation projects from the RTP. Link led the development of the Integrated Regional Plan (IRP) as part of the application process for the MRA stream, which was submitted to the Government of Canada (GOC) in December 2025. The GOC has since adjusted the MRA stream, and Link and DPW will continue working with the GOC to finalize a funding agreement under the CPTF.
Additional support for community transportation	In progress	Link continued to support community transportation operators across the province through three core programs: • Community Transportation Assistance Program • Accessible Transportation Assistance Program • Public Transit Assistance Program Pre-implementation funding was provided for the development of a new door-to-door service in Cape Breton Regional Municipality, with a launch expected in 2026-27.

Organization

Initiatives that support the ongoing growth and evolution of Link Nova Scotia.

Initiative	Status	Details
Operating structure options review	Complete	The operating structure options review for Link was completed in 2025. Based on recommendations from the operating structure options review, Link formally organized into four divisions: Financial and Corporate Services, Planning and Partnerships, Engineering and Project Delivery, and Operations. The Link team grew in 2025-26 with the addition of new staff across these divisions, providing the capacity and expertise needed to advance the RTP and other initiatives.
Organization re-brand	Complete	The Joint Regional Transportation Agency was officially rebranded to Link Nova Scotia in July 2025, following the

Organization rebrand cont'd		proclamation of amendments introduced through Bill 24 in February 2025. The rebrand included a new logo and a refreshed visual identity.
Collaboration, relationship-building, and information-sharing	Ongoing	Link continued to work closely with its Core Partners and provincial departments throughout 2025–26 to support coordinated planning and decision-making. This included collaboration on RTP priority actions, shared access to transportation data and analysis, work with DPW on the Highway 102 corridor, and engagement with federal partners on transit and active transportation funding opportunities.

Financial Results

Crown/Agency Expenses Summary

	2025-2026 Estimate	2025-2026 Actuals	2025-2026 Variance
Salaries and benefits	$1,405,000	$2,087,330	$682,330
Professional services	$682,000	$1,259,569	$577,569
Operating Expenses	$230,000	$671,306	$441,306
Grants	---	$903,500	$903,500
Total - Expenses	$2,317,000	$4,921,705	$2,604,705
Additional Information			
Provincial Funding	($2,317,000)	($3,945,412)	($1,628,412)
Other Revenue Sources	---	($976,293)	($976,293)
Total Revenue	($2,317,000)	($4,921,705)	($2,604,705)

Agency Expenses Variance Explanation:

Higher-than-budgeted expenditures reflect Link Nova Scotia's continued organizational growth, including the resources required to support the agency's expanded mandate and strategic priorities, including grants issued to Core Partners to advance shared transportation initiatives.

Revenue, Fees and Recoveries Variance Explanation:

Higher-than-budgeted revenue reflects additional funding from the Province of Nova Scotia to advance Regional Transportation Plan actions and add capacity to support Link Nova Scotia's expanded mandate, as well as federal funding through the Canada Public Transit Fund to develop the Integrated Regional Plan.

Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act

The following is a summary of disclosures received by Link Nova Scotia:

Information Required under Section 18 of the Act	Fiscal Year 2025-26
The number of disclosures received	0
The number of findings of wrongdoing	0
Details of each wrongdoing	N/A
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrongdoing	N/A