

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

### *Main Estimates Speech*

*Hon. Bill Fraser*

**Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure**

**Minister Responsible for the Northern and Miramichi Funds**

**February 28, 2017**

Thank you Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here today to answer questions about the 2017-18 budget estimates for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure.

The 2017-2018 ordinary budget of \$302.1-million for DTI provides a solid basis for the Department to offer necessary services to the general public. This reflects our government's priority to maintain New Brunswick's roads, bridges and buildings to ensure the safety of the travelling public while keeping a focus on providing the services in a cost-effective manner.

The \$638.5-million capital budget for DTI is designed to stimulate job creation and support economic growth. It reflects the government's priority to support asset management of the 22,900 kilometers of highways in our province, and to address the state of the 6,300 bridges and large culverts that are the responsibility of DTI. Our budget has maintained the increased funding level of \$25-million for the Municipal Designated Highway Program.

We are enormously proud of the strong levels of cooperation between the province and the federal government. Cost-sharing agreements with the federal government are allowing New Brunswick to move forward on a number of very significant infrastructure projects, for example, the Centennial Bridge project in Miramichi.

We have also recently made new project announcements with our federal partners that will have important economic benefits for New Brunswickers.

- The Petitcodiac River Restoration Project will establish a new permanent bridge over the Petitcodiac River connecting the Town of Riverview with the City of Moncton. This will mean a safer and more reliable crossing for commuters and tourists, and a restored tidal flow that will greatly enhance eco-tourism and economic growth for the region. This is a major infrastructure project that will see the provincial and federal levels of government commit a total of \$61.6-million to this final phase of the project. The development is scheduled to be completed in 2020-21.
- When it comes to New Brunswick's natural wonders, the Fundy Trail needs no introduction. Here is an example of government building on our province's proven strengths.

Investing more than \$45-million in the Fundy Trail Connector Infrastructure Project will improve connections to the Fundy Trail Parkway, help create jobs and increase the number of tourists who visit our province.

This project will create a link between St. Martins and Alma, giving travellers easier access to Fundy Coast experiences. It will also allow travellers to connect to Sussex via Creek Road. Our work will integrate major tourist attractions including Hopewell Rocks, Cape Enrage, and Fundy National Park.

- The \$272-million commitment to Route 11 will make the road safer and more efficient. The safety of the travelling public is the priority of our Department, and Route 11 is a project that has safety at its core.

Route 11 has been a priority for successive provincial governments. Over the years there has been a great deal of talk while accidents, injuries and fatalities continued to mount. By putting forward \$147.1-million in provincial funding, the government is making a clear statement that now is the time for action.

The project involves twinning 20 kilometres from south of the Shediac River to south of the Little Bouctouche River, and construction of an 11-kilometre, two-lane, controlled-access bypass between Glenwood and Miramichi.

New Brunswickers want their government to make investments that will create jobs, grow the economy and improve their quality of life. This investment will allow us to do that, while creating a better future for this province and those who choose to live, work and raise a family here.

These investments are all consistent with our vision, mission and values. These are prime examples of how we are getting things done for New Brunswickers.

Before we get started, I would like to introduce the staff I have with me here today:

- Kelly Cain, Deputy Minister
- Mark Gaudet, Assistant Deputy Minister of Strategic Services;
- Bob Martin, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Buildings Division
- Gary Lynch, Executive Director of Facilities Management for the Buildings Division;
- Tony Desjardins, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Transportation Division
- Jules Michaud, Executive Director of Operations for the Transportation Division
- Serge Gagnon, Chief Engineer for the Transportation Division
- Charlotte Valley, Director of Finance and Administrative Services
- Shannon Sanford, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs

I'd like to thank them all for being here today. Of course these are the people I get to see every day.

I'd also like to take the opportunity to thank everyone in our department for their work. I've had the privilege to visit our operations around the province and meeting the men and women who work so hard to deliver excellent service to New Brunswickers.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to take questions from members of the House.

Thank you Mr. Speaker

