



Overview
of the
Business Plan
2007 to 2016

Shubenacadie
Canal Commission

November 2006

Briefly stated...

The Shubenacadie Canal was begun almost 200 years ago as an industrial engine for the new colony. It succeeded as an engineering marvel, but did not fulfill its potential because it was overtaken by a new form of transportation: the railway.

The Shubenacadie Canal Commission (SCC) was formed in 1986 and given a mandate to “oversee and further promote the historical and environmentally significant Shubenacadie Canal System”, and has been working for the last 20 years to breathe new life into the waterway.

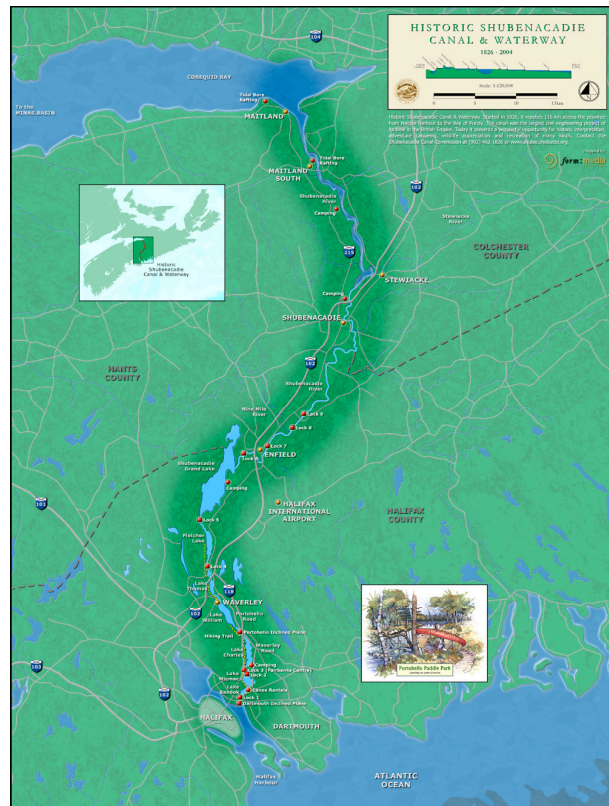
There have been a number of successes to date. Lock Three and Lock Five have been restored, water levels are being stabilized and the Dartmouth Inclined Plane is slated for partial restoration. Much more, however, needs to be done.

Through a series of visioning sessions, rural community outreach opportunities, cross-cultural exchanges with Native leaders and professional research contracts starting in 2004, the SCC identified several unique opportunities to re-open the waterway and have it become a ‘First-Choice’ destination, providing heritage, tourism and health promotion values for residents, businesses and visitors.

That Vision is fully supported by this Business Plan, which outlines six Strategic Priorities, plus the Action Plans needed to achieve them. Current and potential funding partnerships are identified.

In essence, the full Business Plan outlines a ten-year matrix, from 2007 to 2016, detailing a year-by-year breakdown of project priorities. The Plan will cost an average of \$1.3 million annually. All three levels of government are being invited to participate. As well, significant input is being sought from private funders, corporate citizens and the public.

When complete, the new Canal and Waterway will become a real economic driver for the Province of Nova Scotia, not as the industrial transportation corridor envisaged by the early investors, but as an internationally know destination for recreation, education, physical activity and adventure.



Vision Statement



We see a waterway bounded by a green belt, spanning the Province from Halifax Harbour to the Cobequid Bay – linking communities en route.

We see an historic treasure, recognized at home and abroad as a unique system of natural lakes and rivers connected by man made locks, canal cuts and inclined planes.

We see access to the waterway enhanced to achieve recreational, educational, cultural, health and economic benefits for residents, businesses and the Tourism Industry.

Statement of Values

We value our heritage, our education, the health and physical fitness of our fellow citizens, and the prosperity of Nova Scotia. To further these ideals, in the context of the Shubenacadie Canal, the SCC believes it is important to identify its stakeholders and to include them in comprehensive planning and coordination sessions. There have been several community-based visioning sessions in the past few years, the most recent of which was in April 2006.

Through these efforts, the SCC has identified some of the best ways to breathe new life into this historic canal while also better serving the needs of rural communities and Native groups wishing to take advantage of its many assets.

An impatience now exists to begin work on several of the identified strategies.

To make our Canal a “success” will not result in the valuable transportation corridor which the original builders envisioned so many years ago. This time, the waterway will become a *destination* known locally and abroad as a soft-adventure and visitor-friendly site where health and fitness values abound for all ages; where people can take real advantage of these attractions while still absorbing the history and culture of Nova Scotia.



Lock Four and Lock Five on the Shubenacadie Canal have been designated under the Nova Scotia Special Places Protection Act. These, and other sites, share valued ecosystem components within the overall system. The SCC is proud to have initiated a number of Screening Environmental Impact Assessments, as well as Habitat Alteration, Disruption or Destruction Assessments in conjunction with all of its recent activities. All future initiatives will also be subject to the same undertakings.

Finally, the SCC has embraced the objectives of the Canadian Heritage Rivers program and is actively completing the application for nomination of this waterway as a member of that exclusive group.

Strategic Priorities

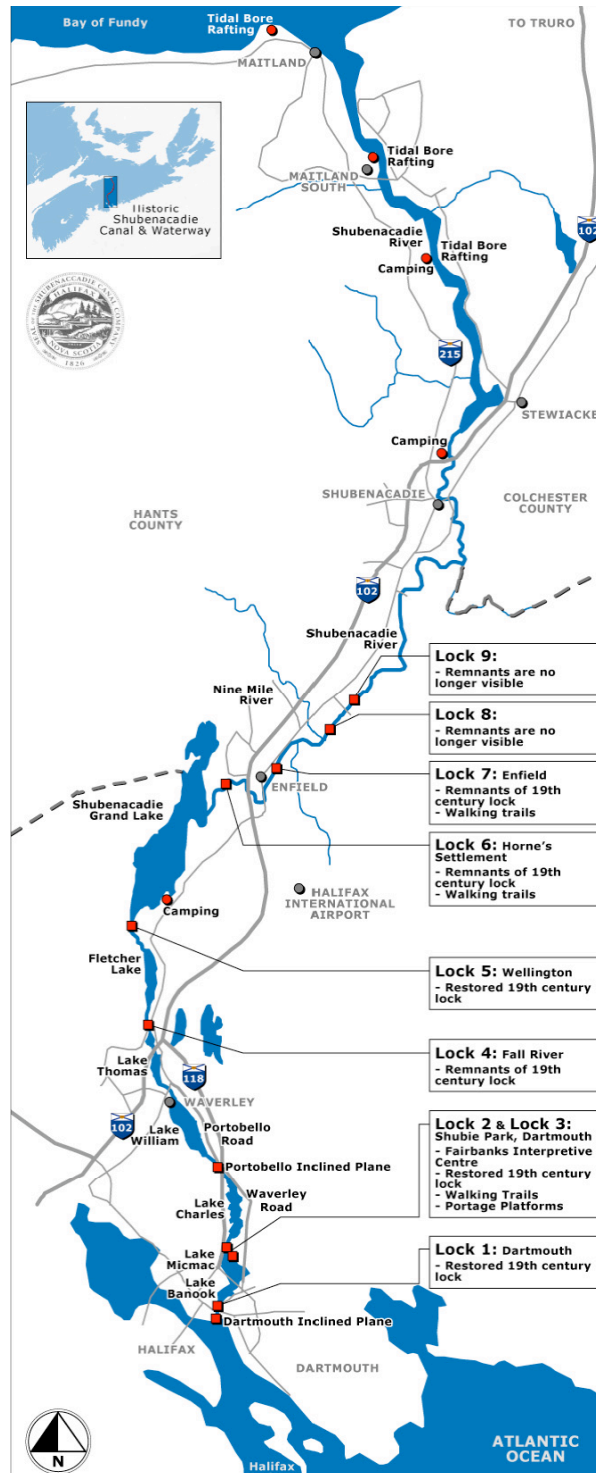
1. Heritage Restoration - Making the locks and dams work

The objective of this strategy is to have actual *working* locks available for all to experience how historic technology overcame great obstacles. Lock One, Lock Three and Lock Five (of the nine locks on the system) have been restored to the point where they could work. This plan will see at least two of those put back into operation for all to admire and actually pass through.

Lock Two, Lock Four, Lock Six and Lock Seven are in urgent need of stabilization and repair. By investing in them at this point, they will remain for another 200 years, a silent testament to the efforts of the original canal builders.

2. Enhance the Canoe/Kayak Experience – Enjoying the Canal

Countless hundreds of people contact the SCC for information about the navigability of the canal every summer. The stock reply for them has always been, “depending on the time of year and the rainfall, the canal *might* be open for small boats.” The objective of this strategy is to rebuild four small water control structures at their original locations on the system to allow for dependable navigation conditions. By establishing these water control structures at PortoBello, Fall River, Wellington, and Enfield, the Canal route could be guaranteed to be “Open for Small Boats” from Dartmouth’s Lake Banook to the Village of Shubenacadie, almost 85% of the original route.



3. Creation of Hiking Trails – Completing the Shubenacadie Trail

The SCC, along with the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Canoe to the Sea Society and partners at the two other levels of government, have completed 24 kilometres of nature trail along the Canal corridor from Halifax Harbour to Fall River and had it registered as an official part of the Trans Canada Trail. A proposed alignment for the balance of the route to the Bay of Fundy has been identified. The objective of this strategy is to work in a section-by-section manner and complete the construction of the remaining 90 kilometres, connecting Fall River to Maitland, with a trail link to Truro.

4. Education Opportunities – Sharing the Lessons of the Past

The SCC maintains two well equipped visitor centres, one on the shores of Halifax Harbour at the canal entrance and another in the very popular Shubie Park, Dartmouth. Both centres were built in the late 1980s as cooperative ventures between the Federal and Provincial governments. They share the story of the human, natural and industrial history of the Canal.

The objective of this strategy is to develop sustainable interpretative programs, using the two centres as a base from which the SCC will reach out to rural communities along the waterway and to Mi'kmaq groups, offering the public a view of the Canal's past and a role in developing its future.



5. Operational Resources – The people needed to fulfill the vision

In the past, the SCC was able to hire staff and support a variety of programs of broad interest to the public. For the last six years, it has survived on a drastically reduced budget. While achieving considerable success, it has relied upon volunteer management and the benevolence of the community. The objective of this strategy is to allocate sufficient finances to support a minimum professional staff, which would ensure the maintenance of existing resources and oversee the realization of the other strategies in preparation for the Canal's future.

6. Promotion Strategy – Positioning this unique opportunity

The Canal offers a broad range of benefits, including tourism, recreation and health, conservation and education, as well as benefits for cultural and heritage preservation. The objective of this strategy is to market the attractions of the Canal corridor to local, regional, national and international audiences as a significant generator of economic, social and health impacts. A Communications Plan is presented on Page 18 of the full Business Plan document, along with several high-profile marketing projects to be rolled out.

Outcomes

Many Maritime destinations offer natural and human history. For most, however, it is growing increasingly difficult to raise the capital required to build the infrastructure demanded by today's travelling public. The Shubenacadie Canal already has the needed infrastructure, and it is unique anywhere in eastern Canada! No capital is required to create this opportunity, just to bring it into the 21st Century and to make it stand apart.

In the view of the SCC, this funding will enable the Canal to fulfill the potential envisaged by its original investors. The first President of the Shubenaccadie Canal Company, Michael Wallace, spoke these words at the sod turning on July 25, 1826; "*Our children, I venture to prophecy, will bless us for the undertaking and our posterity will find it one of the best legacies bequeathed to them by their ancestors.*" Of course, Mr. Wallace was speaking of an economic benefit which he felt would come from industrial transportation on the Canal. Today, the benefits will be:

- * A real, historic waterway that has easy access and working locks.
- * A multi-day, suburban/rural soft-adventure destination close to an urban centre.
- * A tourism magnet close enough to metropolitan centres to generate capital.
- * A linear, natural park that offers a healthy outdoor experience, the equal of any.

Contributing to the Economic Well-being of Nova Scotia

The SCC maintains that there is a wide range of potential benefits associated with canal restoration which go beyond the benefits associated with the waterway itself, including:

- * Rural economic regeneration:
 - Act as catalyst for business and social renewal;
 - Increase development value and the opportunity for investment;
 - Generate long-term economic activity and opportunities for employment;
 - Offer the valuable 'quality of life' attractions important to new businesses.
- * Tourism expansion:
 - Act as a tourism asset in its own right;
 - Provide a link between existing/new attractions;
 - Support the Tourism Industry through water-based adventures.
- * Active Transportation:
 - Act as a waterborne transport corridor for people and freight;
 - Form important cycling, walking, skiing and public access corridors.
- * Sport and recreation opportunities:
 - Host a wide array of international sporting events;
 - Provide an important venue for *ad hoc* family sport and recreation activities;
 - Contribute to the health and well being of society.
- * Heritage, culture and the natural environment:
 - Form a unique heritage, cultural, educational and environmental asset;
 - Host a wide array of important historic buildings and structures.

The results of our consultations with local communities and associated stakeholders on the issue of re-opening at least the two sections of the Canal indicated complete recognition of the potential benefits. All communities along the waterway expect increased tourism and wider economic benefits which local businesses will share, as has happened in other jurisdictions with canals in Canada and abroad.

In Canada an excellent example of these benefits is the restoration of the Lachine Canal in Montreal. Completed in 2002, a largely abandoned industrial area of the southwest part of Montreal was transformed into a spectacularly popular example of urban rebirth.

In Great Britain, Tourism Development International has undertaken an assessment of the tourism benefits of re-opening their canals. It showed that there could be in the region of £1.1m to £1.4m per annum, including multipliers (\$3 to \$4 million CDN). It also assessed the wider economic regeneration benefits arising from canal restoration, including increased economic activity in sections of the Canal corridor areas of up to £2 to £4 million per annum (\$4 to 8 million CDN) and significant jobs created over a three year construction period; followed by wider employment in subsequent years. Similar examples exist in Poland, Sweden, the USA and France.

Investment in the Canal and its associated natural areas provides a range of benefits well beyond the traditional economic models. The direct and immediate impact of funding is clearly evident in providing more jobs and employment within the immediate area, both directly resulting from the investment activities and indirectly from suppliers and local businesses.



Further investment to secure and develop the potential of the Canal corridor will have future impacts that reflect broader personal and societal values of a healthy and productive place to live and enjoy. In addition, the Canal corridor will catalyze new tourism and recreational sector initiatives that can utilize resources and opportunities which become available.

- * Economic opportunity is created when “Smart Businesses” are attracted to areas because their employees can enjoy natural amenities.
- * Increased education levels result from the availability of natural resources, when protected and promoted for research purposes.
- * Broad scientific benefits flow from the availability of these natural resources and systems which are protected from irreversible change, then promoted for scientific research and technological development.

Partnerships in Funding

- Proposal -

<u>Partner</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount</u>
• <u>Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency</u>		
	- Dam at Lock Five	\$ 1,215,000
	- Stabilize Lock Four	1,060,000
	- Rebuild Lock Two	1,050,000
	- Water Control Structures (3)	<u>200,000</u>
	Sub-Total	\$3,525,000
• <u>Province of Nova Scotia</u>		
	- Shubenacadie/Trans Canada Trail	\$ 1,000,000
	- Gates at Lock Three	350,000
	- Annual Capital Maintenance (10-years)	220,000
	- Stabilize Lock Six	260,000
	- Stabilize Lock Seven	310,000
	- Dam at Lock Four	60,000
	- Retaining Wall at Lock Five	80,000
	- Inclined Plane – PortoBello	<u>30,000</u>
	Sub-Total	\$2,310,000
• <u>Halifax Regional Municipality</u>		
	- Inclined Plane – Dartmouth	\$ 1,450,000
	- PortoBello Paddle Park	314,377
	- Shubenacadie Trail	<u>825,000</u>
	Sub-Total	\$2,589,377
• <u>Municipality of East Hants</u>		
	- Dam at Horne Settlement	\$ 1,200,000
	- Shubenacadie/Trans Canada Trail	400,000
	- Survey of Locks Eight & Nine	<u>30,000</u>
	Sub-Total	\$ 1,630,000
• <u>Municipality of the County of Colchester</u>		
	- Shubenacadie/Trans Canada Trail	\$ <u>1,600,000</u>
	Sub-Total	\$1,600,000
<u>Total of this 10-Year Plan</u>		<u>\$ 11,654,377</u>