

Halifax Chamber of Commerce National Transportation Policy Principles

The Halifax Chamber of Commerce recommends the federal government embark in the development of a new national transportation strategy that would:

1. Underscore the government's role in the creation of a viable and globally competitive transportation policy to ensure that Canada has a proactive, concise, safe and secure transportation infrastructure that facilitates social and economic growth and maintenance of a healthy environment.
2. Establish service standards for each transportation mode. Such a policy should be merit-based and founded upon industry and business cases, rather than largely on political imperatives that change with election outcomes.
3. Recognize that each transportation mode is at a differing stage of development, regulation, competitive environment and capabilities.
4. Take into consideration differing transportation standards in other jurisdictions, where interjurisdictional and/or intermodal co-ordination can prevent unnecessary bottlenecks.
5. Address the intricacies of each transportation mode and its respective infrastructure needs. It should also recognize that not all transportation should be, or can be, based on self-financing or cost-recovery models. Due to the country's dispersed geography, the policy must acknowledge that some transportation routes must be subsidized or must be considered differently.
6. Encourage private sector infrastructure investment and reward.
7. Decrease environmental impact wherever possible. New infrastructure development should be designed with environmental sustainability taken into account.

8. Identify clear action timelines and milestones, with an accountability and established review periods attached, similar to long range corporate business planning criteria. Any new policy should operate on a business model, whenever possible. It should have defined action items, timelines for accomplishment and accountability to accomplish action items and definite review periods attached.
9. Address situations of concern and opportunities facing the different transportation modes. The transportation system, like any economic system, must evolve with changes in society and technology. Any policy designed to govern the transportation system should be similarly flexible. It must be able to adapt to the times and to deal with new, emerging and emergent issues. (Global transportation security issues in light of terrorist threats spring to mind immediately as an example of a fairly new concern that must be considered in larger transportation policy issues.)
10. Take into consideration the five lenses of Transport Canada's Gateway Strategy as a basis for policy creation:
 - 1) International commerce strategy
 - 2) Volume and values of national and regional significance
 - 3) Future patterns in global trade and transportation
 - 4) Potential scope of capacity and policy measures
 - 5) Federal role and effective partnerships

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