

Highway 104

Sutherlands River to Antigonish



1. Asset information

Highway 104 is a major transportation link in Nova Scotia, connecting the province to New Brunswick and the mainland to Cape Breton Island.

Dexter Nova Alliance was the consortium selected by the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Maintain the new stretch of highway. In addition, Dexter Nova Alliance is responsible for the operation and maintenance of an additional 25 kilometres of existing highway over a 22-year period.



2. Impact

Reliable, safe and resilient transport and reduced travel time for c. 3 million vehicles per year



3. Awards and certifications

- CCPPP Award 2020 – Project Development – Silver Award
- CCPPP Award 2023 - P3 Design & Construction – Gold Award

4. Environment

GHG emissions

Dexter Nova Alliance has a policy to reduce idling for staff and subcontractors to help reduce greenhouse gases and to minimize the use of fossil fuels.

Much of the equipment fleet is equipped with GPS systems that monitor engine working time vs idle time and generate utilization reports for management to review. In a further effort to reduce / eliminate idling, heavy equipment will automatically shutdown if the equipment is left idling, if it is safe to do so.

The state-of-the-art equipment fleet is also equipped with reduced emissions systems which are maintained to ensure proper operation and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

New light vehicles added to the fleet are continually looked at for economical and environmental efficiencies.

Climate risk

The project was screened to evaluate the potential physical impacts from climate change based on 'Paris-aligned' (RCP2.6 ~+1°C) and 'High emissions' (RCP8.5 ~+3.7°C) scenarios across three time periods (2020, 2050 and 2100). The project maintains a Low physical climate risk score under both scenarios.

Waste & Water

Dexter Nova Alliance recycles as much waste as possible from their own consumables and from debris that is collected along the roadway, including plastics, glass, metals and tires.

Dexter Nova Alliance has a Waste and Contamination Management Plan in place. The Plan states that all waste will be sorted and disposed of in accordance with the Nova Scotia's Solid Waste-Resource Management Regulations under the Environment Act.

Local officials (Police, Fire, other) are contacted, and precautions taken when Hazardous materials or unknown materials are encountered.

Reclaimed asphalt from milling and paving operations is not permitted for use in pavement resurfacing, however, recycled materials are retained by Dexter Nova Alliance for future use in place of virgin manufactured aggregates, wherever possible, for example to strengthen areas susceptible to washouts and for parking lots etc. This also reduces the amount of trucking required to dispose of used material. Dexter Nova Alliance will follow all applicable guidelines and regulations for non-hazardous waste, including but not limited to:

- Domestic waste from site offices and work zones including food waste which shall be gathered daily and stored in appropriate containers for removal and disposal at an approved waste disposal site
- Dexter Nova Alliance will ensure that no litter is left in the Right of Way or project areas relating to Dexter Nova Alliance Operations
- Recyclable materials and materials not permitted to be disposed of at landfill (paper, cardboard, drink containers, wood, scrap steel, paint, metal and tires) will be collected separately for recycling
- Contaminated soils encountered will be disposed of at an approved facility
- Waste is not burned on site
- Non-recyclable, non-hazardous construction wastes will be removed from site for disposal at an approved waste disposal site
- Storage areas for waste will be set up at least 30m from waterbodies and 60m from wells

Dexter Nova Alliance Operations has installed groundwater monitoring wells adjacent to the salt storage domes. These wells are sampled on a prescribed schedule and analyzed against baseline measurements.

Dexter Nova Alliance Operations maintains an oil/water separator within the equipment maintenance bays at the Main Depot. The separator is regularly inspected. Fluids are removed by an approved subcontractor.

Biodiversity

The asset is built in compliance with local environmental regulations.

- Black ash was protected via design and was moved to allow for the species to continue to grow.
- Various wildlife corridors have been designed to allow for small, medium and large mammals via stand-alone crossings, wildlife fencing, wildlife trails under bridges
- Replanting trees/shrubs around EDP (at ends of culverts)
- Existing box culverts were removed and bridges installed which allowed better fish passage and wildlife crossings

Additionally, Dexter Nova Alliance has a Biodiversity policy in place.

Noise and air quality

Dexter Nova Alliance has a no-idling policy.

5. Social

Health & Safety

Health and safety is on the agenda each board meeting.

Dexter Nova Alliance Operations has acquired and continues to maintain, in good standing, its Certificate of Recognition from the Construction Safety Association of Nova Scotia for their comprehensive health and safety program.

Dexter Nova Alliance Operations has maintained a zero Lost Time Incident safety performance since June 1, 2021.

Diversity

Dexter Nova Alliance and its subcontractors have a workforce diversity policy in place.

Impact for local communities

Dexter Nova Alliance's subcontractors employ local First Nations people and meets regularly with the First Nations working group to review opportunities for indigenous labour.

Dexter Nova Alliance Operations supports local non-profit organizations throughout the year and participates in local events including parades.

In December 2024, Dexter Nova Alliance will support the Antigonish Naomi Society, Antigonish Community Food Bank, Viola's Place, Pictou County Food Bank, Antigonish Town & County Palliative Care Society and the Pictou County Palliative Care Society as part of their Holiday donation campaign. A record of previous donations is stored on the Dexter Nova Alliance GP SharePoint site.

Dexter Nova Alliance Operations continues to implement community minded best practices and takes a long-term approach by supporting local businesses and hiring employees from the local community. It has also participated in special events including the Christmas Parade.

Dexter Nova Alliance Operations employees live within local communities and have a personal desire to maintain a safe and efficient highway corridor.

Dexter Nova Alliance Operations has integrated into the local business community and with first responder resources – fire, police etc.

6. Governance

Delegation & oversight

The project has the following policies in place which are reviewed and updated annually:

- Health & Safety
- Quality
- Rapid Escalation Plan
- Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG)
- Cyber Security
- Tax
- Authority delegation matrix
- Anti Bribery
- Modern Anti-slavery
- Whistle Blower
- Biodiversity and Deforestation
- No-Idling
- Payments
- Responsible Contractor

The project has a rigorous governance structure in place centered around quarterly board meetings. The Management Services Provider is governed by a detailed Management Service Agreement, which provides for clear guidance on their day-to-day responsibilities and authorities.

Reporting

The project utilises a quarterly board pack, reporting to the board of directors on the operational and financial performance of the project and compliance with its obligations and regulation/legislation, including the policies.

Additionally, Dexter Nova Alliance reports annually into BBGI's ESG KPI survey, which composed of 100+ data points, covering all aspects of ESG oversight

Cyber security

Dexter Nova Alliance periodically performs information risk analysis and develops mitigating measures. They have a robust and comprehensive IT backup system in place.

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