

Transportation: The most costly item for Nova Scotian households

Costs Nova Scotian households even more than shelter

Report urges switch to more efficient and affordable transport

HALIFAX, NS. NOVEMBER 29, 2006 – The largest cost for Nova Scotian households is not health, housing, food, or even shelter, but transportation – when its full costs are counted. And the cost of transportation is rising relentlessly. But the full extent of that rising cost is not visible to households, according to a new, more than 550-page report released today by Genuine Progress Index (GPI) Atlantic, that pegs the true cost of road transportation in Nova Scotia at more than \$6.4 billion annually.

The GPI Transportation Accounts: Sustainable Transportation for Nova Scotia is the most detailed, comprehensive, and rigorous analysis of transportation indicators ever conducted for Nova Scotia. The study found that Nova Scotia relies overwhelmingly and increasingly on highway transportation to move both passengers and freight. It estimates that in 2002, the true cost of road transportation in Nova Scotia was at least \$6.4 billion -- the first time that total cost has been calculated for Nova Scotia.

The full cost includes both direct costs that the consumer or user pays, and also a range of invisible costs that are either paid indirectly (for example, through taxes, higher prices for goods, or increased health costs), or are not counted in the market economy (for example, the long-term costs of greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions).

“The average Nova Scotian spends about \$3,036 a year directly on costs such as vehicle ownership and operation, transit fares, and parking – and incurs an additional \$4,562 in indirect economic and environmental costs,” explained GPI Atlantic Executive Director Ronald Colman, Ph.D. “As consumers, we see the direct costs – fuel, car payments, insurance, registration fees, and repairs – but we don’t see the indirect costs.

“For example, Halifax homeowners pay hundreds of dollars annually in property taxes that provide roads, parking spaces, traffic patrols and other services for motorists, and in income taxes that provide provincial and federal services related to transportation. For example, vehicle emissions create serious health problems and contribute to global warming, and governments cover those costs. There are uncompensated accident and crash costs, and there’s even a cost to congestion, like the value of the time people spend stuck in traffic jams.”

Other indirect costs include “free” parking, transport-related water pollution, and the value of the land devoted to roads and parking lots.

“We pay these kinds of costs indirectly through taxes and higher consumer prices, and also by imposing environmental costs on future generations,” notes Dr. Colman. “So we don’t connect those costs with our transportation choices. If we did, we might make quite different choices.”

GPIAtlantic

The GPI Atlantic study is designed to assess Nova Scotia's transportation system in terms of its sustainability – its capacity to “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” GPI Atlantic's mission is to assess Nova Scotia's progress and the sustainability of its economy by considering social and environmental factors which are ignored by traditional economic measures, and by applying “full cost accounting,” which quantifies and “monetizes” the costs of such factors.

GPI Atlantic's analysis shows that Nova Scotia's transportation system, with its heavy reliance on roads both for passengers and freight, is not sustainable – and its problems are growing. Between 1990 and 2002, passenger travel increased by 5.2% and truck freight traffic by 66%. Greenhouse gas emissions from heavy-duty diesel trucks increased by 54%, and emissions from light-duty gasoline trucks, including SUVs and mini-vans, jumped by more than 60%. Off-road vehicle emissions rose by 68%.

In fact, of the 20 key indicators of sustainable transportation examined by GPI Atlantic, 13 were pointing in the wrong direction, away from sustainability. A few indicators, including air pollution, crashes involving dangerous goods, and recycling rates, showed signs of improvement. But most indicators were deteriorating, including transportation expenditures, accessibility, truck freight reliance, and energy efficiency.

Some of the key problems identified in the GPI Atlantic report stem from “sprawl” – rapid low-density suburban and ex-urban development that increases automobile dependence and results in longer commutes.

The report's co-author, Todd Litman, Executive Director of the Victoria Transport Policy Institute, noted that alternative policies in land use and transportation could give Nova Scotians more travel options and a variety of other benefits by encouraging ride-sharing, public transit, telecommuting, walking, and cycling.

“That's known as ‘smart growth,’” said Mr. Litman. “Smart growth communities reduce real transportation costs to both individual consumers and society when all costs are taken into account.” Such communities have shops, schools, work-places and high-quality public transit all within convenient walking distance. These kinds of communities result in lower transportation costs and also enhance public health, safety and fitness.

“Our report shows that the transport market is distorted because so many of the costs of road transportation are externalized and concealed,” Mr. Litman notes. “But many of those distortions can be corrected using Win-Win solutions.”

“We can lower taxes on employment and instead charge users directly rather than indirectly for using roads and parking facilities and for imposing pollution costs, and we can convert registration fees and insurance premiums to distance-based fees,” he says. “At the same time we can improve walking and cycling conditions and public transit services. This will reduce municipal costs, traffic congestion, energy consumption, and pollution – and at the same time we'll improve public health, reduce urban sprawl, save consumers money, and improve mobility options for non-drivers.”

In releasing its report, GPI Atlantic welcomed the announcement, last Friday, November 24, that the Government of Canada is investing \$37.5 million investment in Nova Scotia's public transit systems. This investment is directly in line with the need for improvements in public transit described in *The GPI Transportation Accounts* report.

Mr. Litman notes that these pricing reforms are not a tax grab for government, but simply a shift in the way we pay for transportation. Motorists who continue their current mileage will pay the same as they do now, on average, but those who reduce their mileage will receive financial rewards. These reforms will end up costing Nova Scotians less, not more, than at present.

“Improving the diversity and efficiency of our transportation system prepares our communities for the future,” says Mr. Litman. “The improvements address the needs of an aging population, reduce the economic risks from rising fuel prices and climate change, support economic development, and allow individual consumers to choose the lifestyles they prefer.

“These strategies don’t require heavy-handed government intervention, and they provide many benefits to consumers and society. It’s just classical market economics that simply matches prices to the full costs of production – which leads to a more efficient and equitable market economy. There really is no reason not to do it.”

-- 30 --

For more information or to schedule interviews, please contact:

Ronald Colman, Ph.D: 489-7007, 823-1944; or colman@gpiatlantic.org;

Clare Levin: 489-2524, or clewin@gpiatlantic.org

Todd Litman: 250-360-1560 (office), 250-588-1581 (cell), or litman@vtpi.org ** Note that Mr. Litman is in BC, 4 hours earlier than Nova Scotia. He will be available for telephone interviews between 4 – 5 pm on the 29th (by cell phone) and all day on November 30th (at his office phone).

For data questions, please contact Aviva Savelson: 604-708-9405; or asavelson@gmail.com ** Please note, Ms. Savelson is in BC, 4 hours earlier than Nova Scotia

NB:

Full Report: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/pdf/transportation/transportation.pdf>

Summary: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/transportation/transportationsumm.pdf>

Press Release: http://www.gpiatlantic.org/releases/pr_transportation.htm

Full Media Package: http://www.gpiatlantic.org/releases/pr_transportation_full.pdf

BACKGROUND

Three “core factors” propel Nova Scotia transportation system away from sustainability

November 29, 2006

A new study by GPI Atlantic released today, *The GPI Transportation Accounts: Sustainable Transportation for Nova Scotia*, examines 20 key indicators of sustainability. Of these, 13 show the province’s transportation system moving away from sustainability.

“This disturbing movement is driven by three major underlying trends, or ‘core factors,’” said Dr. Ronald Colman, GPI Atlantic Executive Director. “These factors affect all the other indicators – energy use, greenhouse gas emissions, road accidents, and so forth.”

Core factor 1: Increased low-density suburban and ex-urban sprawl

The fastest-growing population in Nova Scotia is the suburban and ex-urban population of the Halifax Regional Municipality, where lot sizes are large, population densities are low, public transit is difficult to provide, and most travel takes place by car. Increasing per capita automobile travel significantly increases transportation costs, energy consumption, traffic fatalities and pollution emissions. It also reduces physical fitness, and provides few options for non-drivers.

Core factor 2: Increased motor vehicle activity both for passengers and freight

Between 1990 and 2002, Nova Scotia’s truck freight grew by an astonishing 66%, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from heavy trucks rose by 54%. Over the same period, Nova Scotia’s population grew only 2.7% — but passenger movement grew by 5.2%, nearly twice as fast. In short, there are more people now in Nova Scotia, and each of us is driving more. In addition, our freight shipments increasingly move on our roads, not by ship or rail.

Core factor 3: The growing share of the personal vehicle market claimed by SUVs and minivans

Between 1990 and 2002, passenger-kilometres travelled in “light trucks” – including SUVs, minivans, and pickup trucks – rose by 49%. Light trucks now account for about 29% of the passenger-kilometres travelled in Nova Scotia. Passenger cars account for 65% of passenger-kilometres, more than twice as many – but the quantity of greenhouse emissions for cars and light trucks is about the same.

“This means that every SUV in Nova Scotia accounts for about twice the greenhouse gas emissions of the average car and about three times the emissions of a small car,” says Dr. Colman. “In 2004, for the first time, GHG emissions from light trucks actually surpassed GHG emissions from cars.”

Meanwhile, the most sustainable modes of transport – bus and rail – claim by far the smallest market shares. Between 1990 and 2002, for instance, bus travel accounted for only 6% of passenger travel.

“For all of these core factors, better alternatives are easy to find,” said Dr. Colman. “Our report points out a good many of them. With urban sprawl, for instance, a more environmentally-friendly strategy would be ‘smart growth,’ where residences, employment, shopping and other amenities are clustered around compact satellite centres linked by public transit to the urban core.”

-- 30 --

BACKGROUND

Data gaps and policy crevasses

November 29, 2006

“You can’t build a house without lumber,” says Dr. Ronald Colman, Executive Director of GPI Atlantic, and co-author of a new study released today, *The GPI Transportation Accounts: Sustainable Transportation for Nova Scotia*. “By the same token, you can’t do analysis without data, and you can’t have good public policy if you don’t have realistic analysis based on solid evidence.”

Colman says that he and his co-authors were seriously hampered by major “data gaps” – information needed for the study which either didn’t exist, or wasn’t accessible.

For example, the authors were looking for essential basic data on rail, marine, and air transportation in Nova Scotia, such as tonne-kilometre of rail freight transported – and couldn’t get it. The information does exist, says Dr. Colman – but it’s suppressed for reasons of confidentiality, apparently to protect commercial interests.

“This makes it really hard to look at the impact of shifting from road transport – for both people and freight – to other forms of transportation,” Dr Colman explains. “Nova Scotia needs to find a better balance between protecting the welfare of commercial interests, and providing access to public information that’s essential for the development of good public policy.”

Dr. Colman and his colleagues worked around this problem by using national information, which is available. The national data show that railways use much less energy and emit much less greenhouse gases than motor vehicles, both per passenger-kilometre (for passenger travel) and per tonne-kilometre (for freight). Based on the national data, the GPI Atlantic study argues that Nova Scotia would benefit from a significantly increased reliance on rail transportation.

Another “data gap” occurred in the 2001 census results. Based on census data for the period 1971-1996, the GPI Atlantic study noted a distinct decline in the density of urban areas across the country, and in every province. Population densities have a huge impact on transportation options. Low-density suburbs, for instance, rely overwhelmingly on road transportation.

“But we couldn’t include urban density trends from the 2001 census because Statistics Canada stopped doing the calculations,” said Dr. Colman. “So we’ve made a recommendation in the study that the tracking and reporting of urban density trends be resumed without delay. The obvious nation-wide trend towards urban sprawl makes this recommendation even more urgent.”

Some of the data available is badly out-of-date – for example, the data for transport-related oil spills has not been updated since 1995, and nor has the data on length of sidewalks in Nova Scotia. And no data are available on key transport-related sources of pollution like roadside herbicides, leaking underground storage tanks, or recycling rates for batteries and used oil.

“Good public policy can't be made in the absence of basic evidence,” said Dr. Colman. “We hammer this quite strongly in the report – but it needs to be said over and over again. The better the information we have, the more likely it is that we’ll make intelligent policy choices.”

-- 30 --

BACKGROUND

Huge increase in ATV use raises NS transportation costs

New report reveals ATV crash figures not released by provincial government

November 29, 2006

A new study by GPI Atlantic released today, *The GPI Transportation Accounts: Sustainable Transportation for Nova Scotia*, reports that the huge increase in ATV use in Nova Scotia accounts for a relatively sharp increase in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions – and also imposes a significant cost due to accidents. Yet the provincial government claims to have no statistics on ATV accidents. In a story in the *Chronicle-Herald* on October 27, provincial sources said the province only tracks accidents that occur on public roads.

“I don’t know why they would say that,” says the report’s co-author, GPI Atlantic Executive Director Dr. Ronald Colman. “We didn’t find it difficult to uncover the numbers. You’ll find them right there in our study.”

The study reports that the number of off-road vehicles involved in accidents rose by 95% between 1996 and 2003. There were 991 reported day surgeries and hospital admissions and 36 fatalities involving off-road vehicles between 1995 and 2004, and the incidence of off-road vehicles involved in accidents resulting in injuries increased by 150% over the period. The Nova Scotia Trauma Registry recorded 122 major trauma accidents caused by ATVs and 29 major trauma accidents caused by snowmobiles between fiscal years 2000-01 and 2004-05.

“This is actually quite shocking,” Dr. Colman observed. “In the summer of 2003, about a quarter of the young trauma patients admitted to the Izaak Walton Killam Children’s Hospital had been injured on ATVs – about the same number injured in car accidents. Considering the number of people who use cars, and the number who use ATVs, that’s way out of proportion.

“And here’s another shocking number: from 1995 to 2004, 28% of day surgeries or hospitalization for injuries related to ATVs were for children under the age of 16 – and 17% of the people who died from ATV accidents were children. Again, that’s way out of proportion, and shows how dangerous ATVs can be for youth.”

Colman notes that new government regulations on off-road vehicle use introduced in April this year, mandating safety training and supervision for children under 16, are intended to reduce these high accident rates among youth. “Only time will tell whether these regulations go far enough. We’ll be monitoring the accident rates closely.”

Also on the health front, Colman remarks that recreational dollars spent on active forms of recreation, such as walking, cycling, or playing games, rather than on driving motorized vehicles, would help to improve levels of physical activity and public health among Nova Scotians.

The explosion in ATV use is not good news from an energy perspective either. The GPI Atlantic study notes that transportation, the world's fastest-growing form of energy use, already accounts for 95% of world oil consumption. Between 1990 and 2002, passenger transport energy use in Nova Scotia grew by 1.1%, and freight energy use by 0.4%. But energy use by off-road vehicles jumped by a whopping 148.5%. And although off-road vehicle energy use is still only a small portion of total transport-related energy use, the off-road proportion jumped from 1.7% of transport-related energy use in 1990 to 4.2% in 2002.

The same is true of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from off-road vehicles, which grew by 68% between 1990 and 2004. Off-road vehicles now produce 10% of all transport-related GHG emissions in the province. The GPI Atlantic report also cites damage to soils, streambanks, flora, wildlife, and fish habitat attributable to ATV use.

Colman points out that most ATV use is entirely recreational: "People need to move freight, and need to travel to work," he notes. "But in this case we need to balance whatever benefits are derived from ATV travel against the costs in lives and injuries and in damage to the planet."

-- 30 --

BACKGROUND

Recommendations: GPI Transportation Accounts

On the basis of the indicators, trends, evidence, costing analysis, and concrete examples presented in GPI Atlantic’s analysis of the state of Nova Scotia’s transportation system, the report authors have developed practical recommendations for creating more efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable transportation and land use patterns.

The evidence clearly indicates that if market distortions are corrected, many consumers will choose to drive less and rely more on alternative modes, and will be better off overall as a result. This reduction in driving would provide a wide variety of economic, social, and environmental benefits that will enhance wellbeing, produce cost-savings, improve environmental quality, and boost long-term prosperity.

In addition to recommendations on policy initiatives that can improve transportation sustainability in Nova Scotia, this report also includes suggestions for strengthening future research in this field. These suggestions highlight critical data gaps and point to directions for further research.

Policy Reforms

We call the policy reforms recommended in this report “Win-Win Transportation Solutions” because each intervention achieves multiple benefits across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. They are cost-effective and technically feasible market reforms that help solve transportation problems by increasing consumer options and removing market distortions that encourage inefficient travel behaviour.

Although their individual impacts may appear modest, the combined benefits of these Win-Win Solutions can be substantial. These are “no regrets” measures that are justified regardless of uncertainties about global warming or other environmental and social impacts. They therefore represent true sustainability strategies, as opposed to strategies like highway widening that may temporarily address one or two planning objectives like congestion and safety but exacerbate other problems (like increased energy use, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions) by increasing total motor vehicle travel and sprawl and thereby undermining even the original objectives.

Because they provide multiple economic, social, and environmental benefits, Win-Win Solutions offer opportunities for cooperation and coordination among various organizations and political interests. For example, developers can support these strategies because they reduce parking costs; social service agencies can support them because they improve affordable mobility for non-drivers; health professionals can support them for their health benefits; and environmentalists can support them because they reduce energy consumption, greenhouse gas and pollution emissions, and sprawl.

The table below lists approximately two dozen specific Win-Win Transportation Solutions in summary form. Each of these options has been described in detail in the full GPI Atlantic report, along with examples of best practices.

Win-Win Solutions

Name	Description	Transport Impacts
Least-Cost Planning Reforms	Programs to reduce demand are considered equally with programs to increase capacity. All significant impacts are included in the analysis, and the public is involved in developing and evaluating alternatives	Increases investment and support for alternative modes and mobility management, improving transport options.
Regulatory Reforms	Reduced barriers to transportation and land use innovations.	Tends to improve transport options.
Transportation Demand Management Programs	Local and regional programs that support and encourage use of alternative modes. For example, rideshare matching, transit improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements, and parking management.	Increased use of alternative modes.
Commute Trip Reduction (CTR)	Programs by employers to encourage alternative commute options.	Reduces automobile commute travel.
Commuter Financial Incentives	Offers commuters financial incentives for using alternative modes.	Encourages use of alternative commute modes.
Fuel Taxes – Revenue Neutral Tax Shifting	Increases fuel taxes and other vehicle taxes with concomitant reductions in income tax.	Encourages fuel-efficiency, and reduces vehicle fuel consumption and mileage.
Pay-As-You-Drive Pricing	Converts fixed vehicle charges (e.g. insurance) into mileage-based fees.	Reduces vehicle mileage.
Road Pricing	Charges users directly for road use, with rates that reflect costs imposed.	Reduces vehicle mileage, particularly under congested conditions.
Parking Management	Various strategies that result in more efficient use of parking facilities.	Reduces parking demand and facility costs, and encourages use of alternative modes.
Parking Pricing	Charges users directly for parking facility use, often with variable rates; provides cash payments to employees not using parking.	Reduces parking demand and facility costs, and encourages use of alternative modes.
Transit and Rideshare Improvements	Improves transit and rideshare services.	Increases transit use, vanpooling and carpooling.
HOV (High Occupancy Vehicle) Lane Priority	Improves transit and rideshare speed and convenience.	Increases transit and rideshare use, particularly in congested conditions.
Walking and Cycling Improvements	Improves walking and cycling conditions.	Encourages use of non-motorized modes, and supports transit and smart growth.
Smart Growth Policies	More accessible, multi-modal land use development patterns.	Reduces automobile use and trip distances, and increases use of alternative modes.
Location Efficient Housing and Mortgages	Encourage businesses and households to choose more accessible locations.	Reduces automobile use and trip distances, and increases use of alternative modes.
Mobility Management Marketing	Improved information and encouragement for transport options.	Encourages shifts to alternative modes.
Freight Transport Management	Encourage businesses to use more efficient transportation options.	Reduced truck transport.
School and Campus Trip Management	Encourage parents and students to use alternative modes for school commutes.	Reduced driving and increased use of alternative modes by parents and children.

Car-sharing	Vehicle rental services that substitute for private automobile ownership.	Reduced automobile ownership and use.
Traffic Calming and Traffic Management	Roadway designs that reduce vehicle traffic volumes and speeds.	Reduced driving, improved walking and cycling conditions.

Source: Litman, Todd. *Win-Win Transportation Solutions: Cooperation for Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits*. (Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 2005f). www.vtpi.org

Just recently, on November 24, the Government of Canada announced a \$37.5 million investment in Nova Scotia’s public transit systems, which will support the purchase of additional transit vehicles and the construction of terminals and other facilities. These types of investments are directly in line with the recommendation above of improving transit options and service.

Improving Evaluation Practices

Improved data collection would greatly facilitate transportation system performance evaluation and planning. Canada and Nova Scotia currently lack standardized data on many key aspects of transportation, including vehicle travel, crashes, transportation program expenditures, energy consumption, travel patterns, transit ridership, and other transportation activities.

Such data should be collected at regular time intervals suitable for evaluating conditions, tracking trends, comparing geographic areas, and undertaking other types of analysis. Standardized statistics of this type are collected regularly in the U.S. and the United Kingdom.

Improvements in data availability and indicator analysis require better data on

- rail, marine, and air transportation (these data are compiled by various agencies, but are not released publicly for confidentiality restrictions);
- water pollution attributable to vehicles, spills, and run-off from roads and parking lots;
- transportation waste, such as, batteries, oil, and anti-freeze – in particular, the degree of compliance and proper disposal;
- land-use patterns and land used for transportation, in particular, up-to-date data on population density, road density, road lengths, sidewalk lengths, and area used for transportation facilities;
- vehicle travel by mode;
- mode split;
- transportation expenditures by consumers, businesses, and governments;
- the quality of transportation services available, particularly for people who are physically, economically and socially disadvantaged, and the degree to which these people experience social exclusion due to inadequate transport options; and
- information on the travel patterns of young people.

Improvements in data collection and availability in these and other areas would stimulate effective analysis that in turn is crucial for informed policy making.

BACKGROUND

What is Sustainable Transportation?

Sustainable transportation is an important part of a sustainable society. In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development published *Our Common Future* (also known as the “Brundtland Report”) which defined the concept of sustainable development as it is most commonly used and recognized today: “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

This view and approach ultimately resulted in the identification of three fundamental components of sustainable development that were to guide policy makers: environmental protection, economic development, and social equity. The table below indicates various impacts across these three dimensions that are considered when evaluating sustainable transportation.

Economic	Social	Environmental
Traffic congestion	Equity / Fairness	Air pollution
Infrastructure costs	Impacts on mobility	Climate change
Consumer costs	disadvantaged	Noise and water pollution
Mobility barriers	Human health impacts	Habitat loss
Accident damages	Community cohesion	Hydrologic impacts
Depletion of non-renewable resources	Community liveability	Depletion of non-renewable resources
	Aesthetics	

In developing the definition of sustainable transportation used in this report, GPI Atlantic reviewed other definitions, such as those used by the *Canadian Centre for Sustainable Transportation* (CST) and the *European Union* (EU). Taking elements from both of those definitions, this report defines sustainable transportation as a system that:

- limits emissions and waste within the planet’s ability to absorb them, uses renewable resources at or below their rates of generation, uses non-renewable resources at or below the rates of development of renewable substitutes, re-uses and recycles its components, and maintains the integrity of ecosystems (**Environment**);
- meets the basic access needs of society safely in a manner consistent with human and ecosystem health, including minimizing noise, and promotes equity within and between generations (**Society**);
- is affordable, operates fairly and efficiently, offers choice of transport mode, supports sustainable local, regional, and national economies, and identifies and accounts for the full costs of transportation systems in an equitable manner (**Economy**).

This definition is the basis for the 20 key indicators and many subsidiary indicators used to assess progress towards sustainable transportation in Nova Scotia.

BACKGROUND

Genuine Progress Index Atlantic

“We currently measure our progress and gauge our wellbeing according to a narrow set of indicators: our economic growth rates. Yet vital social and environmental factors remain invisible in these measures.”

Ronald Colman, Ph.D., Executive Director

The Organization

- A non-profit Nova Scotia-based research and education organization founded in 1997
- A pioneer and international leader in quality of life research
- Completed over 60 reports on a range of social, economic, and environmental measures of progress

The Index

The Genuine Progress Index (GPI) is a new measure of sustainability, wellbeing and quality of life consisting of 20 social, economic, and environmental components.

The Approach

The GPI approach is a more accurate and comprehensive measure of progress than the current, conventional practice of equating progress with economic growth alone.

Since economic growth statistics simply measure how much we produce and spend, they fail to distinguish economic activities that contribute to wellbeing from those, like crime and pollution, that cause harm. The value of unpaid work like that of volunteers and care-givers, is ignored. The depletion of our natural resources is counted as if it were economic gain. And the economy can grow even as inequality and poverty increase. By valuing social, economic, and environmental factors fully, the Genuine Progress Index remedies these flaws in our current measures of progress.

“If critical social and ecological assets are not counted and valued in our measures of progress, they receive insufficient attention in the policy arena. The GPI values the health and education of our population, the strength of our communities, our livelihood security, the quality of our environment, and the health of our natural resources.”

Ronald Colman, Ph.D., Executive Director

The Mission

GPI Atlantic's core mission is to conduct research on the Genuine Progress Index, which measures environmental, economic, and social progress and wealth, and to assist leaders in business, government and communities in using the GPI perspective in their decision-making.

The Genuine Progress Index recognizes that true long-term prosperity and wellbeing are ultimately dependent on the protection and strengthening of social and environmental assets.

GPIAtlantic

The Nova Scotia GPI is intended as a pilot project for Canada, and GPI Atlantic is now co-leading a nation-wide effort to create a new Canadian Index of Wellbeing.

GPI Atlantic also produces a national publication: *Reality Check: The Canadian Review of Wellbeing*. To receive complimentary hard copies of this publication, please contact Clare Levin (below). Past issues are available on the GPI Atlantic website (below).

Website Links

More information about the GPI and about GPI Atlantic can be found on our website:

Home page: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/>

Media gallery: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/media.htm>

Press Releases: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/releases/releases.htm>

Publications main page: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/publications/pubs.htm>

Reality Check: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/realitycheck/index.htm>

Canadian Index of Wellbeing: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/ciw/index.htm>

About GPI Atlantic: <http://www.gpiatlantic.org/society/about.htm>

ReThinking Development Conference (June 2005):

<http://www.gpiatlantic.org/conference/index.htm>

Contact

Ronald Colman, PhD, Executive Director

Phone: (902) 823-1944; Mobile: (902) 489-7007; colman@gpiatlantic.org

Clare Levin, Managing Director

Phone: (902) 489-2524; clevin@gpiatlantic.org

Fax: (902) 405-1221

GPI Atlantic
535 Indian Point Road
Glen Haven, NS B3Z 2T5
Canada