

Benefits of The Windsor-Essex Parkway

The Windsor-Essex Parkway will be the most significant highway investment made in Ontario history. It reflects a commitment by the governments of Canada and Ontario to build the right solution. It is unparalleled in terms of the scale and uniqueness of its community enhancement features for any highway, anywhere in Ontario. It provides for the safe, efficient and timely movement of border-bound traffic and goods while directly addressing community concerns and goals.

Air Quality

- With its wide right-of-way, and improvements in traffic flow achieved by eliminating the stop-and-go conditions caused by the current traffic signals in the Highway 3 / Huron Church Road corridor, The Windsor-Essex Parkway will reduce transportation related air quality impacts in the Windsor-Essex region.

Noise

- Noise levels in many areas will be reduced by the combination of lowering the highway, eliminating stop-and-go traffic on the route to the border, and the strategic placement of tunnels, noise barriers and earth berms.

Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics

- Strategically located tunnels will result in improved community connections.
- Takes trucks off local streets.
- The addition of more than 300 acres of green space will buffer residents from the freeway and service roads.
- New recreational opportunities will be provided with the creation of 20 km of recreational trails.

Economic Impact

- Implementation of The Windsor-Essex Parkway, and the new plaza and crossing, will have an overall positive effect on the regional, provincial and national economies by ensuring the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services across the Canada-United States border.
- It is estimated the construction of The Windsor-Essex Parkway will create 12,000 project-related jobs.

Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

- Habitat restoration and enhancement will be implemented to create new and higher quality habitat for endangered species.
- Permanent protection will be provided for the critical habitat of a local population of the endangered Butler's gartersnake.
- Enhancement and restoration of habitat located along The Windsor-Essex Parkway will result in a net gain in the quantity and quality of natural habitat and will re-establish connections between designated natural areas.
- Tunnels such as the Oakwood Tunnel will reduce existing barriers for wildlife and enhance wildlife movement across the corridor.

Vegetation and Vegetation Communities / Designated Natural Areas

- More than 300 acres of lands will be made available for recreational green space, enhancement or restoration. Opportunities to dedicate portions of these lands to appropriate bodies for protection will be discussed at later design stages.
- Lands acquired for The Windsor-Essex Parkway will be available to be dedicated for protection including provincially rare vegetation communities, habitat for species at risk, wildlife corridors and other ecological functions. As a result, a net gain in the extent of designated natural areas with important ecological functions will result from the Recommended Plan.
- There are also opportunities to partner in enhancements to other lands in public ownership adding another opportunity for overall benefits. MTO will consider entering into agreements with organizations for the transfer and long-term management of surplus lands.
- The areas for restoration and enhancement will result in the creation of new Monarch butterfly habitat as these areas can be intentionally or naturally seeded by host plants.

Fish and Fish Habitat

- Fish locks will be incorporated to provide fish passage upstream and downstream in the Cahill and Lennon drains thereby maintaining access to upstream spawning areas.
- The removal of 30 entrance culverts and the redesign of the Wolfe Drain using natural design principles will lead to overall enhancements to fish habitat.
- Stormwater quality control within the highway corridor will lead to overall enhancements to water quality and net benefits to fish and fish habitat for receiving watercourses.

Landscape Plan

- The Windsor-Essex Parkway is sensitive to community needs, providing significant buffer areas between the roadway and neighbourhoods; protecting, restoring and enhancing ecological areas; creating potential recreational opportunities; and improving community connectivity.

More information can be found by viewing the Draft Environmental Assessment report at www.partnershipborderstudy.com