

The Seven Evaluation Factors

As part of the Environmental Study, the DRIC study teams in Canada and the U.S. established seven evaluation factors to assess the various alternatives identified by the study team. In consultation with stakeholders, these factors were weighted, giving more weight to factors whose impacts are considered to be more important. These factors have guided the technical studies and have helped the DRIC study teams focus on the issues that matter most to the host communities. Evaluation throughout the Environmental Study has been and will continue to be measured against the seven factors. This will ensure a fair and replicable evaluation process takes place and a solution is identified that best balances project objectives, community needs and technical requirements.

The evaluation of the Practical Alternatives will be considered in the overall context of the international and national significance of the Detroit River crossing in terms of the economy, security, and ability to provide continuous river crossing capacity. A full evaluation, however, cannot be completed without input from the community. Throughout the Canadian DRIC study, the study team has met with the members of the community to get a local perspective on these issues. The public has helped the study team identify key areas of interest, historical features, and natural areas that need preserving. Through community consultation the study team gained a greater understanding of the importance of current air quality measurements to the community and added a field measurement component into the air quality workplan. Residents have told the study team how they feel about their community, how they use their property and how the proposed project may impact those uses. These are just a few examples of the influences the people of Windsor-Essex County have had on the DRIC study.

Data gathered from public meetings, open houses, workshops, focus groups and other correspondence has been included as important information to be considered in relation to the seven major factors groups in the analysis of Practical Alternatives. The public has a role to play in the evaluation of the Practical Alternatives and the public's continued involvement will guarantee the success of the DRIC study.

The table below shows how the various factors are used in evaluating alternatives against each other and in comparison with future conditions without a new crossing (or the "do nothing" alternative).

Factors	What does this mean?
Changes to Air Quality	What is the air like now and will there be changes in the levels of pollutants in the atmosphere in the next 10, 20, and 30 years?
Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics	How will each alternative affect homes and businesses? How will traffic change? Will there be additional noise and vibration? Can they be mitigated?
Consistency with Existing and Planned Land Use	What currently exists in this area? What is planned for the future of this area? Will introducing any of the alternatives into this area radically change the current uses of the area?
Protection of Cultural Resources	What historical, cultural and archaeological features exist in this area? Are there parks and recreation sites in the area? How will these be impacted by any of the alternatives and how can these be avoided or impacts be mitigated?
Protection of the Natural Environment	What is the natural environment composed of in this area? What species inhabit this area? Will the introduction of any of the alternatives negatively impact ecosystems, species, water systems or other important natural resources? Are there areas of environmental significance or species at risk that may be affected? Are impacts avoidable or can they be reduced or mitigated?

Improvements to Regional Mobility	What will be needed to improve traffic flows in this area? How can a new river crossing and plaza be efficiently managed?
Cost and Constructability	What is the cost of each alternative? Is each alternative constructable? Will each alternative provide value for the tax dollar?