

Project:	Detroit River International Crossing	Meeting No.	
Project No.	33015385	Date:	January 9-10, 2007
Location:	Holiday Inn Ballroom	Time:	6:45 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Purpose:	PIOH4-Workshops		
Present:	<i>DRIC Study Team Representatives:</i> MTO – Dave Wake, Roger Ward, Joel Foster URS – Murray Thompson, Len Kozachuk, Colin Wong, Irene Hauzar, Sandra Hantziagelis LGL – Audrey Steele SENES –Abby Salb, Fred Bernard		

Tuesday January 9, 2007

The workshop session held on Tuesday January 9 began at 6:45pm. A round table question and answer with the Study Team and workshop participants was conducted. The following summarizes the discussion on the various topics raised by participants.

Air Quality

Comment: The air quality monitoring stations were set back too far from the roadway to accurately measure the air quality.

Response: The setbacks from the roadway for the air quality monitoring stations are similar to that distance of a house along the roadway, and are within prescribed guidelines for the monitoring equipment. The monitoring stations take readings 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and are measuring PM2.5, PM10 and NOx.

Comment: There is a misconception regarding the AQ results presented at the PIOHs. The statement was made that the air quality found adjacent to the tunnel ventilation buildings will be worse than that elsewhere in the project area. The statement presented at PIOH4 for the tunnel alternative stated "NOx concentrations increase over a broader area compared to the at-grade alternatives". It was suggested that this statement be simplified/clarified.

Response: It should be emphasized that overall NOx emissions from vehicles are expected to be lower in the future due to improved fuel and engine technology; transportation contributes a small percentage of overall pollutant concentrations.

Comment: Questioning the accuracy/precision of the air monitoring methodology and results. The perception is that "local" emissions (from trucks) are not being captured.

Response: The Ontario Ministry of the Environment, and Health Canada will be reviewing the air quality analysis that is being conducted for the DRIC study.

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Comment: The "real" pollutant levels are being downplayed. Participants expressed concern with current and future health impacts and health costs. There was skepticism with how the analysis will be presented to the public, and the methodologies used during the analysis.

Impacts to Community and Heritage Features:

Comment: Sandwich contains cultural heritage features that are significant to both Ontario and Canada. Participants expressed concern that crossing C (over Sterling Marine Fuels) would dislocate both people and businesses. Participants stated that they want the new crossing as far away from Sandwich as possible.

Traffic Data:

Comment: Would like to see traffic data presented on an hourly basis for the complete 24-hr period for the air quality and noise impact assessments.

Response: For planning studies such as DRIC, it is typical to obtain traffic volumes for the peak 8 hours of the day and use factors to estimate traffic volumes for the remainder of the day.⁸ The Study Team can reflect the unique traffic characteristics of the roadway by adjusting the factors.

Comment: The total annual estimated truck traffic volume should be presented to the public so they are aware of how many millions of trucks will be passing through the community annually.

Business Impacts:

Comment: Tourism related economic development is supported. The DRIC study has helped to open up communication between Sandwich and the Fort Wayne/Delray areas of Detroit. Each community is more aware of the historical significance and interests their respective areas. Discussions between each community have included developing a 'two nation vacation/destination' promotion to bring tourists into each area. The DRIC project can have a positive economic impact on these neighbourhoods.

Participation of Elected Officials:

Comment: Local Member of Parliament was not present at the workshop.

Response: Dave Wake assured the participant that both the provincial and federal governments were aware of this study; and that they are briefed about the meetings and analysis that is being conducted for this study. The Minister of Transportation (Honorable Donna Cansfield) has been to Windsor several times since becoming minister and is very aware of the importance of this study to the community.

Wednesday January 10, 2007

The workshop session on Wednesday January 10, 2007 began at 6:40 p.m. A round table question and answer with the Study Team and workshop participants was conducted. Glenn Pothier, moderator for the DRIC project, began the workshop by introducing topics that those that signed up suggested be discussed at the January workshops. The suggested topics included safety, access, aesthetics, noise, construction staging, nuisance and heritage. The following summarizes the discussion on the various topics raised by participants.

Tunnel Alternative

Comment: Why is the tunnel cost (\$3.8 billion) so much higher than previously reported?

Response: The Study Team last reported costs associated with any of the alternatives at the illustrative alternatives phase of the study. At that time, all alternatives were compared assuming at-grade freeway facilities. The Study Team is looking for ways of reducing the effects of the highway on the adjacent areas. Alternatives that reduce impacts to land include the depressed roadway or tunneled options. The 'at-grade' options have a lot of depressed sections, which lessens the adjacent property impacts, and increases the costs of these alternatives.

Comment: Why is it impossible to do the tunnel? If a tunnel is not feasible on this roadway, choose another roadway.

Response: A cut and cover tunnel has been determined to be feasible and is being considered along with at grade and depressed access road alternatives.; however, a bored tunnel is not practically feasible due to the size of the tunnel required for the access roads, poor soil conditions within this area, high water tables and construction risks to adjacent land uses. As for choosing another corridor, in June 2005, the Study Team developed 15 different crossing locations, and evaluated each alternative according to seven evaluation factors (air quality, community and neighbourhood impacts, cultural resources, land use, natural features, mobility, cost and constructability). In November 2005, the Study Team determined that the Area of Continued Analysis (ACA) was the most appropriate location for the development of practical alternatives.

Question: Why can't the at-grade alternative be dropped from consideration?

Response: The at-grade alternative is a reasonable alternative to evaluate and consider; at-grade highways are typically constructed in Ontario. The environmental assessment will document the analysis of each alternative and the Study Team will make a recommendation for a preferred alternative that best balances the need to meet the transportation and mobility objectives while reducing impacts.

Question: Why do the ventilation buildings have to be constructed so big?

Response: The ventilation buildings are being developed by a subconsultant firm specializing in ventilation buildings (RWDI). The size of the vent buildings reflects the volume of air in the tunnel to be handled. The building size is required to accommodate the many large fans needed to move the air in the tunnel.

Comment: The cost and size of implementing ventilation buildings are scare tactics.

Response: The Study Team is reporting back to the public what the tunnel requirements area. Smaller ventilation buildings can be placed more frequently along the proposed freeway. The Study Team asked CCG members where they would suggest the ventilation buildings be placed. This input led to the two vent building sites that are presently being considered.

Areas around ventilation buildings often have marginal increases in concentrations (NO_x), however, there is often a drop in PM_{2.5}. PM 2.5 is the fine particulate matter that is breathable. Once the analysis is completed, the Study Team will have an understanding of what mitigation might be appropriate.



Comment: Look to implement 21st design when implementing this project; consider smaller ventilation buildings, do not use scare tactics with the public. Make the technical language user-friendly. When the analysis is complete, put it in laymen's terms so that the average person can understand it.

Comment: The Air Quality Monitoring stations are not placed at the correct locations. They should be on the downwind side of Huron Church/Highway 3 relative to the prevailing (southwesterly) winds.

Response: The Study Team considered placing an air quality monitoring station on the north side of Highway 3 at Mount Carmel School; however, the Study Team was not able to receive approval from the Board of Education in a timely matter. Therefore, the air quality monitoring station was placed on the south side of the street across from Mount Carmel School. The air quality monitoring stations collect meteorological data and track wind patterns. The measured concentrations of particulate matter reflect road dust, brake dust, dust from tire wear, asphalt wear, and pollutants that come from the tailpipe. The measured concentrations are being compared to standards prescribed by the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Health Canada, as well as the other monitoring stations in the area.

Noise:

Comment: Noise impacts would be mitigated by depressed alternatives.

Response: Overall noise impacts would be reduced the further away you are from the roadway and if the roadway is depressed, which will provide shielding from noise. However noise barrier walls could have similar mitigating results.

Comment: Noise will be generated from elevated sections of highway and the downshifting from trucks (jake braking).

Response: Mitigation measures that can be employed if necessary for the at-grade alternatives include installing noise barriers at least 5 metres in height. The Ministry cannot prohibit engine braking on roadways, as this may create a safety risk.

Property and Business Impacts:

Comment: Request for clarification on the statement made at PIOH 4 - depressed, tunnel and at-grade roadways with noise barriers have similar impacts with respect to business impacts.

Response: The impacts referred to by the economic impact specialists refers to visual impacts. Businesses require a degree of visibility to attract customers. The statement does not refer to noise as businesses are not considered sensitive receptors.

Question: Are there going to be consultation focusing on the Sandwich area?

Response: Yes, Social Impact Assessment Focus Groups are being arranged and a notice will be circulated shortly.



Comment: Participants expressed interest in providing display material at the focus group meetings illustrating the degree to which Sandwich would be "decimated" by the combined impacts of Crossing C and potential impacts of Ambassador Bridge expansion plans.

Response: This issue will be discussed at the Sandwich Social Impact Assessment Focus Groups. Display materials are welcome.

Lighting Impacts:

Comment: Participants expressed concern over the lighting that may be used at the new plaza. Current plaza lighting is diffused into the community. Is this issue being addressed at this stage of the project?

Response: Plaza alternatives will meet the needs of Canada Border Services Agency. A plaza has a requirement to maintain a high level of lighting for security and safety purposes. The potential impacts due to light trespass will be reflected in the analysis of the plaza alternatives.

Governance:

Comment: The bridge needs to be operated as a non-profit operation and should not be owned privately. Dave Wake clarified that the new crossing will be subject to public oversight, meaning that any private entities involved will answer to the government. A comment was made that the public is unclear about the extent of public and government involvement. This is a concern.

Response: Comment noted. The Partnership is studying options for ownership/operation of the new crossing. Public oversight has been identified as a key issue in any governance model.