



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

KIRK T. STEUDLE
DIRECTOR

August 15, 2007

Joe Polak, Project Manager
Detroit International Bridge Company
P.O. Box 32666
Detroit, Michigan 48232

Dear Mr. Polak:

Thank you for your letter of July 25, 2007, introduced into the record at the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) Local Advisory Council meeting of the same date. In your correspondence, you state that when we evaluated an additional crossing adjacent to the existing Ambassador Bridge, the bi-national Border Transportation Partnership failed to factor in additional advantages of private investment at this location. However, the two items you mention, the use of non-tax dollars and the ability to use tolls as matching funds, apply equally to both publicly and privately owned and operated facilities of this nature.

As the Illustrative Alternatives were evaluated by the Partnership, a requirement of all alternatives considered was that the new crossing would have public oversight. Still, this requirement would not preclude private participation in the development or operation of the facility. Funding for the construction and future maintenance of a structure of this magnitude will ultimately come from the users of the structure in the form of tolls paid. There are several examples of publicly owned and operated facilities in this state and around the country that demonstrate there are no "unique" advantages to private ownership.

Your letter further states that "...the advantages of the enhancement at the Ambassador Bridge were not carried forward because of Canadian consultant preferences based on false assumptions of the negative impacts on the Canadian side of the river." As a member of the Partnership, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) does not agree with your assertion. The documentation that you refer to in your letter is only part of the information included on the Partnership's project website, www.partnershipborderstudy.com. That complete body of work fully supports the Partnership's decision to eliminate from further consideration the alternative of adding a second span to the Ambassador Bridge. In making that decision, the Partnership clearly recognized that the U.S. analysis scored the second span alternative very high. Likewise, the Partnership recognized and respected the Canadian analysis, which demonstrated a significant community impact to the area surrounding the plaza and along Huron Church Road, which would feed a second span of the Ambassador Bridge. Those Canadian impacts were based on sound information documented in the multiple volumes of reports on the project website. This will all be discussed in the draft Environmental Impact Statement being prepared.

Joe Polak, Project Manager

Page 2

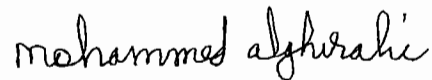
August 15, 2007

In your letter, you also asked “what will the U.S. team do to hold taxpayers harmless if the premises of the Canadian preferences – the basis for halting your continued consideration of the ‘top performing’ Ambassador Bridge and the DRIC Alternatives – are demonstrated to be false and misleading?” MDOT believes the work of the Partnership has been sound and thorough. In response to your question, the DRIC study, as well as your proposed project, will each have to deal with the prevailing market forces at the time the respective projects move forward to obtain the necessary financing to complete the project. The Partnership is confident that the market will respond favorably to the proposed DRIC crossing for a number of reasons, including its cost and ability to serve border crossing traffic. So, the market response will “hold the taxpayers harmless” in building any new crossing, including that proposed by the Partnership.

It is relatively easy to make vague assertions of “false assumptions.” If you have specific examples, we would be happy to address the validity of the assumptions used during the analytical review of the various alternatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your inquiries. Should you have any remaining questions, please feel free to contact me at (517) 373-7674 or alghurabim@michigan.gov.

Sincerely,



Mohammed S. Alghurabi, P.E.
Senior Project Manager