

**Detroit River International Crossing Study**  
**Joint LAC/LAG Meeting**  
**June 18, 2008, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Southwestern High School**

**Purpose:** To present the U.S. analysis to date with respect to identifying a Preferred Alternative for the Detroit River International Crossing.

**Attendance:** See attached.

**Discussion:**

**Status of U.S. Announcement**

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that an announcement had been made earlier in the day by the Canadian DRIC team on its Preferred Alternative. Fausto Natarelli from the Ontario Ministry of Transport was in attendance to assist with any issues that might arise on that announcement. It is the intention of tonight's LAC/LAG meeting to indicate to the community that:

1. The U.S. is aware of the announcement by our Canadian partners. It is consistent with the technical and environmental analysis that has been undertaken on the U.S. side of the border to date.
2. Utilizing comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and analysis of the impacts, the U.S. team has identified the best alternative at this time for being considered the Preferred Alternative. It will be refined as preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement proceeds in order to lessen the impacts, to the extent possible. Appropriate mitigation measures to accomplish this objective will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.
3. The U.S. team continues to collaborate with the Canadian team to develop an end-to-end solution that will be detailed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement which is expected to be produced in the fall of 2008.
4. The Canadian and U.S. environmental processes are similar but different. While the Canadian process announces a "Preferred Alternative" prior to writing of the environmental document, the

U.S. process announces the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS. Currently, the U.S. team continues to review comments and develop responses to them as well as evaluating various mitigation measures, including engineering refinements to the alternatives. The U.S. Preferred Alternative will be a result of that process.

Mohammed Alghurabi then indicated that Joe Corradino would make a presentation. The materials which will be discussed are in the handouts provided to each of the attendees of the meeting. Other members of the LAC and LAG not in attendance will receive a package of these materials by Friday. The regular LAC/LAG meeting will be on Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, at which time the presentation by Joe Corradino will be repeated.

### **Presentation**

Joe Corradino then used a PowerPoint presentation to review the best alternative at this time for being considered the Preferred Alternative. First, he discussed the alternatives documented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement as well as the evaluation factors used in the analysis. The first step in the analysis was to focus on the crossings. As a result of key determinants in the areas of regional mobility, potential relocations and constructability, the X-11 Crossing is not considered the best candidate for being considered the Preferred Alternative. Likewise, because of the cost and constructability issues associated with Crossing X-10A, it is also not considered the best candidate for the preferred crossing. That leaves Crossing X-10B, connected to Plaza P-a, as the best alternative at this time for consideration as the Preferred Alternative.

Joe Corradino then discussed the specific interchanges that are available for further examination once the X-11 Crossing is eliminated. Two of those interchanges (Alternatives #3/Interchange C and Alternative #5/Interchange E) would remove at least one historic building. U.S. law prohibits such alternatives from going forward, if there is a reasonable and prudent alternative. There are four other interchange configurations which avoid historic properties that are reasonable and prudent alternatives. Additionally, one interchange (Alternative #14/Interchange G) is not considered a viable alternative for further analysis because of its lack of access to I-75 as well as across I-75 for vehicular traffic. Joe Corradino explained that leaves Alternative #1/Interchange A, Alternative #2/Interchange B, and Alternative #16/Interchange I for further examination. He then turned the presentation over to Bruce Campbell who indicated that five key areas were considered in examining these remaining interchanges:

1. Local vehicular access to and from I-75;
2. Local vehicular access across I-75;
3. Springwells interchange;
4. Service drive alignment at Berwalt Manor; and,
5. Pedestrian access across I-75.

Based upon detailed engineering review addressing these issues, a “hybrid” interchange was established. Bruce indicated that the hybrid alternative would allow a much "tighter" design of the Springwells interchange, minimizing potential displacements. It would also allow complete movements to be made, although somewhat indirectly, at the Clark Street interchange with I-75. The hybrid interchange would allow the same number of pedestrian crossings of I-75 that exist today. Additional modifications are being made to allow as much cross-I-75 vehicular access as possible.

Joe Corradino concluded the presentation by indicating the work that continues includes collaborating with the Canadian team; collaborating with the U.S. federal/state agencies; and, completing the FEIS/Record of Decision/Access Justification Report by the end of 2008.

With the presentation completed, Mohammed Alghurabi then asked for comments or questions.

Q: Mary Loubriel asked if the pedestrian access at Springwells would be eliminated.

A: Bruce Campbell said the pedestrian access would remain.

Q: Tom Cervenak asked about the radius of the ramps and if the tighter radius made the traffic slower.

A: Bruce Campbell indicated that Alternative #14/Interchange G had a 35 mph ramp speed, while the preferred speed is 45 mph. The slower design speed did not lessen impacts.

Q: Tom Cervenak asked for an explanation of how access to Fort Wayne would be provided.

A: Bruce Campbell responded that access directly from the plaza to the local street system would be provided. Joe Corradino noted that further consideration is being given to coordinating access with wayfinding signs to Fort Wayne at the plaza and in the surrounding street network.

Q: Tom Cervenak asked if selecting Crossing X-10B determines which bridge type will be constructed.

A: Bruce Campbell responded that selecting Crossing X-10B did not indicate a preferred bridge type. Joe Corradino noted that the bridge type would not be decided in the Environmental Impact Study phase of the work.

Q: Tom Cervenak asked why the Canadians announced their Preferred Alternative before the U.S.

A: Mohammed Alghurabi reiterated that the Canadian process is similar but different from that in the U.S. The Canadians must announce their Preferred Alternative prior to undertaking their environmental assessment.

Q: John Nagy indicated that closing Livernois and Dragoon will divert truck traffic to Westend Street and Dearborn Avenue. He indicated that the burden of additional truck traffic is not desirable and he stressed that there was a need for a dedicated truck route.

A: Joe Corradino responded that both Westend Street and Dearborn Avenue are currently truck routes and lead to interchanges with I-75. It had been noted all along that those routes would continue to receive trucks in the future. There would not be additional truck traffic in the neighborhood, but by inserting the plaza, traffic would be redistributed and Westend and Dearborn will absorb additional truck traffic. In light of that, the plans for the Delray area call for the introduction of what is known as the Gateway Boulevard which will be a street on which truck traffic will be prohibited. The boulevard will complement the neighborhood's hoped-for revitalization.

Q: John Nagy responded that "I guess we will have to agree to disagree." He stated that trucks travel up and down Westend at all hours of the day and night. He stressed that rerouting trucks to Westend and Dearborn would be a burden to people who live along them.

Q: Tom Cervenak asked if truck traffic effects can be mitigated. He asked if the trucks carrying steaming slag coming out of the Zug Island area might be covered with tarp to minimize the noxious odors.

A: Mohammed Alghurabi responded that MDOT will look into that.

- Q: Bill Muir asked if the project replaced or removed the four pedestrian overpasses.
- A: Bruce Campbell responded that the number of pedestrian crossings will remain the same before and after the DRIC. However, they will not necessarily be in the same locations based upon the need to accommodate the new connection between the DRIC plaza and I-75.
- Q: Bill Muir asked what type of public comment process there will now be, based on the hybrid alternative being introduced, that no one has seen before.
- A: Mohammed Alghurabi responded that we will continue to hold monthly meetings like the one tonight throughout the rest of the project. Additionally, he indicated that the project team has always been responsive to requests for smaller meetings for further elaboration.
- Q: Mickey Blashfield stated he was curious about why anything prevented the information being presented tonight from being included in the DEIS so that people could comment on a specific alternative?
- A: Joe Corradino responded that it was important to have full disclosure and interaction on the full range of alternatives so all were included in the DEIS. Further, a complete understanding of how to address the brine well problems in Canada took several months. Therefore, a decision on an alternative could not have been made by the time of the DEIS. Joe Corradino noted that Mr. Blashfield's question and his company's position on extending the comment period by six months were confusing because they were contradictory.
- Q: Mickey Blashfield asked that, because the Preferred Alternative was identified tonight, why wasn't there advance notice of this meeting. Joe Corradino stressed that tonight's discussion was not an identification of the Preferred Alternative. Instead, it was an identification of the best alternative at this time for being considered the Preferred Alternative.
- Q: Peter Brenz of Friends of the Detroit River expressed concern about access to the Detroit River. Further, he stressed that the new plaza should be named the Fort Wayne Plaza.
- A: Joe Corradino indicated that a boat launch could be available in Delray if Homeland Security will have the final say.

One final comment involved concern about air quality and the lack of comment in this evening's presentation on that matter. Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that there is extensive information in the

Draft Environmental Impact Statement as well as supporting technical reports on air quality. He referred the commenter to the appropriate source of that information.

With that the meeting concluded at 8:45 p.m.