

DRIC STUDY TEAM'S REVIEW OF GREENLINK COST ESTIMATES

The Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study team continues to assess the City of Windsor's GreenLink proposal using information provided by the city. Focusing on the cost estimate for GreenLink, the DRIC study team has determined that the cost for GreenLink presented in October 2007 and the revised cost presented in March 2008 do not include all expenses that are needed to deliver a safe and efficient access road to a new border crossing. When all the essential safety features and other elements are added into the GreenLink proposal, the cost for taxpayers rises significantly.

In October 2007, the GreenLink cost as presented by the City of Windsor, ranged from \$1.56 to \$1.67 billion. The cost presented for GreenLink in March 2008 rose to \$1.77 billion. The DRIC study team assessed the October cost estimate, using available information, and found that it did not include some crucial safety features, engineering criteria and other realities that need to be factored into the development of an accurate cost estimate for the roadway. In particular, the GreenLink estimate:

- Is based on a 7.3 km highway, not the 9 to 12 km highway needed to fully connect Highway 401 to a new bridge inspection plaza. Impact on cost estimate: High;
- Does not account for inflation and is presented in 2007 dollars. A more accurate representation would have been for GreenLink costs to be inflated using a standard rate to 2011 dollars, when construction will be fully underway. Impact on cost estimate: Increases total costs by approximately 15%;
- Does not include engineering and contract administration – both necessary elements in the delivery of the roadway. Impact on cost estimate: Increases cost by 10%;
- Specifies substandard shoulder widths and a 20-year storm drainage system. These design and road safety standards are not acceptable for this important international border system and additional costs would be incurred to bring them up to Ontario standard. Potential impact on cost estimate: Medium;
- Riskier approach to construction methods that could lead to extensive delays and substantial cost overruns, particularly in regard to excavating under the Grand Marais Drain. Potential impact on cost estimate: High;
- Does not include the costs of having a tunnel control centre, which would be required to operate the additional fire, life safety and mechanical ventilations systems necessary for the GreenLink tunnels. Impact on cost estimate: Medium;
- Does not include the ongoing operating and maintenance costs associated with additional mechanical, fire and life safety requirements for GreenLink. Impact on cost estimate: Medium.

The DRIC study team prepared a cost estimate for GreenLink that includes building a full length facility, with full shoulders, appropriate drainage design, a tunnel control centre, contract administration, and with costs adjusted to 2011 dollars. The DRIC study team cost estimates of the GreenLink concept range between \$2.3 and \$2.5 billion.