
DRIC Traffic Projections Confirmed by Michigan Study

February 17, 2010

STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION THE HONOURABLE KATHLEEN WYNNE

Ontario today received the results of the traffic study the Michigan Department of Transportation reaffirming key findings from the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study: that traffic volumes will increase over the long-term in the Windsor-Detroit gateway, confirming the need for additional crossing capacity to reduce congestion and move traffic quickly to and from the border.

“We are pleased that the conclusions of the DRIC study have been confirmed by MDOT’s investment grade study. A new border crossing is essential to the economic prosperity of Ontario and poses no jeopardy to the viability of existing crossings. Our government will continue to collaborate with our partners and invest in infrastructure to keep Ontarians working and international trade moving across our shared border in Windsor.”

— Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Transportation

Each component of the DRIC border transportation system – access road/interchange, inspection plazas and river crossing – will contribute to the improved movement of goods and people through the Windsor-Detroit border. The Windsor-Essex Parkway, Ontario’s six-lane access road, will provide capacity to meet increased long-term travel demand as well as a direct connection from Highway 401 to the U.S. interstate system for the first time. This, along with separation of international and local traffic and the elimination of traffic signals for international traffic, will improve overall system connectivity.

QUICK FACTS

- The DRIC study was the most extensive transportation environmental assessment Ontario has undertaken. It included more than 300 community consultation events, exhaustive technical studies and hundreds of hours of field work. Ontario and Canada approved the DRIC environmental assessment in 2009.
- The DRIC study found that failing to address the congestion problem at the Windsor-Detroit border would result in 94,000 fewer jobs by 2035 in the U.S. and Canada. Personal incomes, living standards and tax revenues would decline, particularly in the local jurisdictions of Ontario and Michigan.
- Essex County contractor, Facca Construction Inc, began initial construction activities for The Windsor-Essex Parkway in December 2009. This \$15.5 million project is expected to create 140 jobs. 12,000 project-related jobs are anticipated with full construction of the Parkway, expected to begin in 2011.