

## **Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics: Social Impact Assessment**

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is part of the overall evaluation factor "Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics." The SIA is being undertaken to assess the social consequences of the alternatives that are being considered for the construction and operation of the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC), including the access roads and plazas, as well as to identify ways of reducing negative effects.

Social impacts occur when a project negatively or positively affects the way of life or lifestyle enjoyed by people, their social relations, the social structure or character of communities, and/or the local or regional services and facilities. The SIA examined the effects to the community of South and West Windsor and LaSalle as a result of the proposed project activities. In order to assess the potential effects, an understanding of the social indicators identified for this study was required. Within the larger community of South and West Windsor and LaSalle, a number of smaller communities were identified adjacent to the Area of Continued Analysis (ACA).

### **How the Analysis was Done**

The assessment was conducted for the Practical Alternatives for access roads, inspection plaza locations and river crossings. Data collection for the SIA involved a number of methods including household questionnaires, social feature questionnaires, focus group sessions, input received as part of the public consultation efforts, stakeholder interviews, site visits and published secondary sources such as Census Canada and from the City of Windsor.

### **Findings to Date**

#### **Practical Alternatives**

- All access road alternatives are consistent with the historical use of the corridor in that this corridor is recognized as an international gateway route in the City of Windsor and Highway 3 is a provincial facility. The current roadway presently carries high volumes of traffic.
- All alternatives displace a similar range of the number of households (between 160-230 households for alternatives 1A and 1B, 170 to 230 for alternatives 2A and 2B, and 140 to 180 for Alternative 3).
- The households displaced are primarily located beside the Highway 3/Huron Church Road corridor; however, community neighbourhoods at Spring Garden Road, Bethlehem Avenue, Reddock Avenue and Talbot Road (Highway 3) will experience a greater change in character and cohesion than other smaller communities located along the corridor.
- Residents in the Spring Garden Road, Bethlehem Avenue, Reddock Avenue and Talbot Road (Highway 3) neighbourhoods will experience a change in community connectivity in the way they are able to access other areas and community resources across Huron Church Road; access will be provided at key locations, and may require minor out-of-the-way travel.
- All alternatives provide a provincial freeway facility connecting Highway 401 to the international crossing for international traffic and will therefore remove international traffic from local streets.

- Both the end-to-end tunnel and below-grade options improve the aesthetics of the corridor by lessening the visibility of traffic for the adjacent communities. The visual characteristics of the tunnel ventilation buildings would not be consistent with the surrounding landscape and may be considered an aesthetic intrusion for nearby residents.
- All alternatives have a similar impact on social features.
- No significant noise impacts are predicted with any of the access road alternatives.
- The displacement of businesses along the proposed access road will have limited overall economic impact. Despite the immediate loss of revenue and employment, the loss of business will be offset by gains in other businesses, or the displaced businesses will relocate to other suitable areas.
- Oakwood Public School bus route is affected by the closure of Spring Garden Road for both Alternative 1A alignments alternatives (Options 1 and 2).
- Increased travel time or school bus re-routing may be experienced by Oakwood Public School and St. James Catholic School.

### *Conclusion*

Potential changes to community cohesion and character for specific neighbourhood communities due to the displacement of residences and social features are similar for all alternatives. The areas of South and West Windsor and LaSalle will benefit from having international traffic removed from local streets and separated from local traffic. Businesses displaced that serve the local neighbourhoods will potentially cause a change in social patterns and community function; however, there is little difference between the tunnel option and the non-tunnel options. The displacement of businesses along the proposed access road will have limited overall economic impact. Despite the immediate loss of revenue and employment, the loss of businesses will be offset by gains in other businesses, or the displaced businesses will relocate to other suitable areas. The new access road will have an aesthetic impact on the community, although this impact is greatest with the at-grade alternatives.

### **Plaza and Crossing Alternatives**

The communities most affected by the plazas and crossings are the southern portion of Sandwich Towne and the residential communities near Matchette Road and E.C. Row Expressway. The noise generated solely from the plaza locations is not expected to cause a high noise impact for areas closest to the plazas. In most cases, homes are more than 50 m (164 ft) away from the plazas. There is one social feature displaced with all the plaza and crossing alternatives – the Erie Wildlife Rescue facility.

### **Plaza A and Crossing Combinations**

Plaza A is located in a rural residential area located in the vicinity of Ojibway Parkway, E.C Row Expressway and Armanda Street. Plaza A is not consistent with the established zoning for the area and will have a substantial impact on the cohesiveness and character of the neighbourhood. The number of dwellings potentially displaced by the Plaza A and crossing alternatives varies between 62 and 66. These residences are primarily situated in an area between Matchette Road and Ojibway Parkway. The proximity of Plaza A to the residences along Armanda Street may result in a larger number of residents being disrupted by air quality changes than with the other Plaza alternatives. Between five and six businesses are

displaced with the Plaza A-Crossing C combination; these businesses are industrial in nature and are not reliant on a waterfront location.

### **Plazas B, B1 and C and Crossing Combinations**

Plaza B, B1, and C are located within the Brighton Beach Industrial Park, consequently, resulting in fewer displacements (approximately 35 to 40 residences) than the Plaza A alternatives. As with Plaza A alternatives, almost all of the residential displacements are within the area between Matchette Road and Ojibway Parkway. Between one and five industrial businesses will be displaced with the Plaza B, B1 and Crossing B and C combinations. Crossing C via Ojibway Parkway is closest to the Sandwich Towne residents. Crossing C is perceived as encroaching into the community. There are five industrial businesses that will be displaced with the Crossing C combination. The potential economic losses due to business impacts will likely be offset by relocation of the affected businesses or gains by competitors. Some negative impacts may result in relation to the specific locational needs of the displaced businesses.

### *Conclusion*

All alternatives impact the residential area between Matchette Road and Ojibway Parkway. Plaza A has the greatest potential effect from a community and neighbourhood features perspective due to the displacement of residences and proximity to the adjacent Armanda Street area. Similarly, Crossing C has the greatest potential for effects from a community and neighbourhood features perspective, due to its proximity to Sandwich Towne. The Plaza B1 and Crossing B alternative is considered to have the fewest overall impacts to the community, including displacement of residents and businesses, in comparison to the other alternatives.

### **Remaining Activities**

The assessment of the Parkway alternative has yet to be completed. This assessment will include further workshops and meetings to collect input from the community on this alternative.

Once a technically and environmentally preferred alternative is identified, additional meetings and workshops will be arranged to help the study team to further define and understand impacts to the communities, identify appropriate mitigation measures and their associated impacts, and development of monitoring activities, as appropriate.