

Partnership of

Canada



Ontario



**Canada-United States-Ontario-Michigan
Border Transportation Partnership**

**Detroit River International Crossing
Environmental Assessment**

**Public Information Open House #5
Summary Report**

August 2007

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1.0 Introduction

The Border Transportation Partnership representing the governments of Canada, the United States, Ontario, and Michigan is committed to working together to determine the long-term border crossing needs at the Windsor-Detroit Gateway. The Partnership is moving forward with the route planning and environmental studies to create additional crossing capacity. Through the Detroit River International Crossing Project, the Partnership will determine the location of a new crossing, with connections to freeways in Ontario and Michigan that meets the legislative requirements of both nations.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is leading the Canadian work program in coordination with Transport Canada. URS Canada Inc. has been retained as part of the Study Team to assist in undertaking the route planning and environmental assessment in accordance with the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act (OEAA) and Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA).

Governments at all levels are committed to completing the work as rapidly as laws and regulations permit, while ensuring interested and affected parties have adequate opportunities to have their perspectives considered. Public input is an essential part of this project. The Detroit River International Crossing Project is a unique opportunity for all interested persons and organizations to contribute to the planning of a major transportation undertaking.

The consultation program for the DRIC Study incorporates Public Information Open Houses (PIOHs) throughout the Study, generally timed with major milestones in the environmental assessment as follows:

Task/Milestone		
Identify Study Area Features	Initial Public Outreach	March 2005
Identify Initial Set of Crossing, Plaza and Connecting Route Alternatives	PIOH #1	June 2005
Identify Area of Continued Analysis	PIOH #2	Dec. 2005
Identify Practical Crossing, Plaza and Access Road Alternatives	PIOH #3	March 2006
Update on Analysis of Practical Alternatives	PIOH #4	Dec. 2006
Update on Analysis of Practical Alternatives (Introduction of Parkway Alternative)	PIOH #5	Aug. 2007

This report summarizes the notification and display material prepared for the PIOH meetings, pre-PIOH activities, attendance, and the public input and comments provided at the Open House sessions.

2.0 Purpose

The fifth round of Public Information Open House (PIOH) meetings were held to present to the public the final analysis of the practical alternatives and to gather input into the Parkway Alternative. PIOH5 was held as follows:

Tuesday August 14, 2007
 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 Holiday Inn Select Hotel, Ballroom
 1855 Huron Church Road
 Windsor, Ontario

Wednesday August 15, 2007
 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 Ciociaro Club, Salons A & B
 3745 North Talbot Road
 Tecumseh, Ontario

The format for the PIOHs was informal drop-in sessions with displays showing the analysis completed for the Seven Major Evaluation Factors (Air Quality, Community and Neighbourhood Impacts, Land Use Impacts, Cultural Resources Impacts, Natural Resources Impacts, Regional Mobility, and Cost and Constructability). The Study Team was available to answer questions and receive feedback from the public. In addition, a new Parkway alternative was developed for the access road, reflecting study goals and the community input received to date.

The purpose of the PIOHs was to share the latest project information with the public and receive comments on the analysis completed to date. In addition to presenting the analysis of the previously identified alternatives, a new below-grade alternative (the Parkway) was presented. Described as a green transportation corridor, the access road for international traffic would be below-grade with a number of short tunnels. Landscaped plans for Parkway Alternative were on display, and landscape architects were available to help facilitate the public's ideas regarding how the access road alternatives should be landscaped. Information on the evaluation process to be undertaken in selecting a technically and environmentally preferred alternative for the crossing, plaza and access road was provided. As well, the public was invited to provide their ideas and comments to help the Study Team to evaluate all the alternatives and develop a single preferred alternative.

The open house sessions also offered members of the public the opportunity to complete sign-up forms to register for PIOH5 Workshop sessions to be held later in August.

3.0 Public Notification

Prior to the PIOH meetings, the following notification activities were carried out to notify the public:

1. A flyer (see Appendix A) was inserted into the following newspapers on the specified dates:

<u>Newspaper</u>	<u>Date of Insert</u>	<u>Circulation (approx.)</u>
Windsor Star	Saturday August 4, 2007	80,000
Amherstburg Echo	Tuesday August 7, 2007	8,300
Harrow News	Tuesday August 7, 2007	1,400
Kingsville Reporter	Tuesday August 7, 2007	2,200
Leamington Post & Shopper	Wednesday August 8, 2007	3,600
Essex Free Press	Wednesday August 8, 2007	3,500
LaSalle Post	Wednesday August 8, 2007	9,800
Le Rempart	Wednesday August 8, 2007	7,300

2. A full-page advertisement (see Appendix B) was published in the Saturday August 11th edition of the Windsor Star.
3. PIOH meeting dates and locations were announced at media events held in advance of the PIOHs. A Media Briefing session was held on August 14th.
4. Notices (see Appendix A) were mailed directly to over 10,000 persons on the Study Team's general public mailing list as well as project Advisory Group contact lists.
5. Notices (see Appendix A) were mailed directly to over 37,000 property owners (as identified on property assessment roll plans supplied by municipalities) and residents within the Area of Continued Analysis.

6. Details of the PIOHs were posted on the project website at www.partnershipborderstudy.com 14 days in advance of the meetings.
7. Public Service Announcements were placed on local community electronic billboards and websites in advance of the meetings.

4.0 Advisory Group Meetings

Meetings were held in Windsor with the DRIC Advisory Groups with the purpose of presenting the analysis results of the Practical Alternatives and introducing the Parkway Alternative. The meetings were held as follows:

Private Sector Advisory Group.....	August 15, 2007
Community Consultation Group.....	August 21, 2007
Municipal Advisory Group.....	August 23, 2007
Canadian Agency Advisory Group.....	September 13, 2007

Notes of these meetings are provided in Appendix C.

5.0 Display Material

The following display material was presented at the Public Information Open House meetings (see Appendix D):

- Contact Information – Canadian Study Team
- The Border Transportation Partnership
- CEAA Process
- Coordination of CEAA & Ontario EA Processes
- Governance
- Chronology of DRIC Study Process
- Property Acquisition
- Purpose of the DRIC Study
- Evaluation Process and Methods
- Access Road Alternatives
 - Summary of Analysis – Access Road Alternatives
 - Changes to Air Quality
 - Air Quality Monitoring
 - Air Quality Assessment
 - Tunnel Ventilation and Contaminant Removal Technologies
 - Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics
 - Maintain Consistency with Existing and Planned Land Use
 - Protect Cultural Resources – Archaeological and Built Heritage Features Impact Assessment
 - Protect the Natural Environment Assessment
 - Improve Regional Mobility Assessment
 - Cost & Constructability

- Cost & Constructability Assessment
- Geotechnical Explorations and Analyses – Access Roads
 - Connecting Communities
 - Parkway Alternative
 - Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)
 - CSS Workshop Summary
- Plaza and Crossings
 - Summary of Analysis-Crossing and Plaza Alternatives (2 boards)
 - Bridge Types
 - Summary of Analysis – Crossing and Plaza Alternatives
 - Foundations Investigations
 - Current Status of Bedrock Explorations & Analyses
 - Crossing Renderings
 - Bridge Type Study
 - U.S. Study Progress to Date
 - U.S. Plaza – Preliminary Analysis Summary
 - Contact Information – U.S. Study Team
- Public Information Open House #4 Summary
- Consultation
- What's Next?
- PIOH5 Workshop Registration

In addition, video simulations of the five access road alternatives (1A, 1B, 2A, 2B and 3) were presented which depicted what the access road would look like in the future along the entire length of the corridor as well as a proposed construction staging scheme for each alternative. The video simulations were the same as those shown at the PIOH (#4) in December 2006.

The attendees were provided with a handout package that contained a copy of the display material (see Appendix D), fact sheets and a CD of the alternatives. Comment sheets were made available to all attendees. Sign-up sheets for the Workshop sessions were available at the meetings, located at five different stations throughout the meeting room.

6.0 Attendance and Comments

A total of **1,672** members of the public chose to sign the visitor's register for the two PIOH meetings (see table below).

In addition to verbal comments, the Study Team encouraged visitors to express in writing, all comments they had regarding the information presented. In total, **207** written comment sheets were submitted at the PIOHs. In addition, **23** comment sheets were received via postal mail, fax, e-mail or via the Study Team website.

A breakdown of attendance and comments by meeting date/venue is provided as follows:

Date / Venue	Total Attendance	Written Comment Sheets Received
August 14, 2007 – Windsor, Ontario	919	99
August 15, 2007 – Tecumseh, Ontario	753	85
Total Comments received via postal mail, fax, e-mail or Study Team website	-	23
Total	1672	207

Attendees were encouraged to provide input to a number of questions on the comment sheets. The following lists the questions asked and written responses received.

Question 1 – The assessment of the Practical Alternatives based on the seven evaluation factors does not support further analysis of an end-to-end at-grade solution at this time. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with this finding and provide any additional comments.

Comments made by participants when answering Question 1 included:

Question 1	Agree: 85	Disagree: 26*
Below grade is better; tunneling is best Should not have been considered at all based upon proposed route and existing land uses; end to end tunnel is only solution that will be environmentally acceptable Will not solve noise or pollution problems Will divide the city into two		

* Although 26 comment sheets recorded "Disagree", in 24 cases, the accompanying comment suggested the respondent was in favour of a tunnel alternative and/or not in support of an at-grade alternative.

Question 2 – Based on the seven evaluation factors, the Study Team has found that the limited benefits of an end-to-end cut and cover tunnel alternative do not justify the additional costs and risks associated with this alternative. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with this finding and provide any additional comments.

Comments made by participants when answering Question 2 included:

Question 2	Agree: 24	Disagree: 82
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disagree; cost is not too high; benefit surpasses costs; want the best solution, not the cheapest solution; want a tunnel; consider healthcare costs Agree; cost does not warrant a tunnel 		

Question 3 – The Parkway alternative was developed to improve the movement of traffic, keep trucks off local streets and to improve the quality of life in the community. Please provide your suggestions for improvements or refinements to the Parkway alternative for the Study Team to consider.

Comments made by participants when answering Question 3 included:

Question 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize tunnel use in residential areas; to minimize visual impact, air and noise pollution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus in tunneling, not parkland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthen the short tunnels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate proper air and noise mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkway is too wide; does not address air and noise pollution concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parklands shown are not usable space for recreational activities (ie sports, soccer, Frisbee, dog walking)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkway concept is comprised of 1920's ideologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkway will divide the city as it does with similar highway systems in Detroit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate more trees/vegetation on the Parkway plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the movement of traffic would clearly result from the proposed Parkway plan and will provide improvement to the quality of life and allow the quickest solution to the traffic problem
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will pay for the proposed landscaped treatments and adjoining connections to local roads/sidewalks?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need 200m to 300m long tunnels with 25m-30m openings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All overpasses on green spaces should be the maximum width of 250 metres
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good concept; especially with local traffic being at grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much improved alternative; communities on west and east side of Huron Church Road will be reconnected; wildlife areas will be re-established and bike paths extended. Noise will lessen with the below grade alternative.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscaped areas should be open, inviting, and well lit. Create public use areas including picnic areas, parkettes, and other recreational opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will monitoring of potential vandalism from the Parkway be monitored?

Question 4 – You can also use the adhesive labels provided to show specific locations where you have comments regarding any of the practical alternatives, including the Parkway alternative. Write the reference number noted at the right on an adhesive label and provide your comments in the space below.

Comments made by participants when answering Question 4 included:

Question 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a tunnel with scrubbers; provide extra parkland; landscaping is preferred to sound barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use retaining walls instead of sloping grass; extend retaining walls 10 feet above grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create one long tunnel at Cousineau with ventilation; landscaping is preferred to an artificial sound barrier.

Question 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take all the homes on Gratiot Street; do not leave any with no access to community facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need larger buffer between the Parkway concept and the playing fields at St.Clair College; provide natural barriers as opposed to a chain link fence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about property value, and view from front yard of the Parkway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On/off ramps need to have low grade to minimize the use of air brakes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned about air quality and noise impacts at Huron Estates; suggestion of tunneling the Parkway at Turkey Creek
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parkway concept at Labelle is excellent and improves quality of life; access to green space on west side of Huron Church Road is much improved and safer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parkway does not improve quality of life; green space proposed is not enough; tunnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider designing Parkway at Southwood Lakes below grade to help mitigate noise impacts; install concrete barriers at Southwood Lakes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an entrance/exit to St. Clair College; move land bridge further past on and off ramps allowing a turnaround for college traffic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ramp from Highway 401 to Labelle/Bethlehem should be changed to have one exit at Labelle and access provided to Huron Church Road
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too much property is taken for the Parkway Alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more buffer to properties located at Oliver Estates; concern with noise and age of homes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If providing recreational facilities on the landscaped short tunnels; provide parking to access these facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow people to cross Huron Church Road at convenient locations and still maintain access to the expressway exits and entrances
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an exit at Howard Avenue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route off ramp traffic toward Highway 3 to avoid additional traffic closer to homes on Imperial Drive in the Southwood Lakes subdivision.

Question 5 – Please provide your comments on the preliminary analysis completed for the Seven Major Evaluation Factors listed in the table below. Consider the following:

- Do you have any concerns relating to the results of the analysis of the crossing, plaza, or access road alternatives?
- Are there any other issues that you feel should be addressed?
- Do you have any comments concerning the analysis work and the methods used to carry out the work?

Comments made by participants when answering Question 5 included:

Question 5 – Changes to Air Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air quality must be kept to the highest standard possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes in air quality should be carefully examined

Question 5 – Changes to Air Quality
• Air quality should be improved over current conditions
• Construct a tunnel with air scrubbers; contain pollutants within a tunnel
• Show actual air quality data to the public; data presented to the public is too complicated
• Concern over higher concentrations of air particulate matter at tunnel openings
• Not satisfied that the Parkway concept adequately addresses air pollution
• Very concerned about air quality as a result of this project
• Concerned about air quality for Sandwich Towne as a result of the plaza alternatives
• Concerned about health impacts to Windsor residents
• Concerned with diesel particulate matter
• None of the alternatives will improve the air quality in Windsor
• Not convinced that the state of the art technology is not being utilized for this project
• No matter what solution is employed there will always be transboundary air quality impacts
• The very limited improvement in the tunneling option versus the below grade option needs to be made more clear
• If the starting and stopping of traffic is eliminated air quality should improve
• Results of the analysis is very good; satisfied with the data presented

Question 5 – Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics
• Neighbourhoods must be protected from excess noise and pollution
• This factor should have the highest weight assigned to it
• This project will divide West Windsor from the rest of the city
• Concern about potential impacts to Oakwood School and adjacent natural areas
• Maintain continuity on each side of the highway as shown with multi-use pathways
• End to end tunnel would protect current community and neighbourhood characteristics
• Good planning in avoiding Ojibway and LaSalle woodlot
• Concerned with established and new residential neighbourhoods surrounding Plaza A; concern for impacts to Sandwich Towne
• Project will clean up the area; add more trees and vegetation
• Concerned about business displacement and future relocations
• Concern that commercial properties located at key intersections, adjacent neighbourhoods are deprived of urban amenities
• Parkway will be a blight on the neighbourhoods and on the city; it will devalue property values

Question 5 – Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics

- Parkway does a nice job of joining the Windsor and LaSalle communities
- Concerned that LaSalle will be cut off from Windsor

Question 5 – Maintain Consistency with Existing and Planned Land Use

- Tunnel will have less impact on existing land uses
- Not in line with the City of Windsor development plan
- No way this project can maintain consistency with existing land use
- Plans ignore the residential nature of the study area
- Parkway infringes present land use and puts the highway even closer to residential neighbourhoods
- Improve existing land uses; Huron Church Road is already a highway; preserve more vulnerable green spaces
- Land uses will be acquired during construction; hope that similar land uses return after construction is completed

Question 5 – Protect Cultural Resources

- Cultural Resources should be ranked higher
- Consider Heritage Park Alliance Church to be a cultural resource
- Must not invade any protected cultural lands
- Good job with the cultural analysis
- Tunneling appears to have the least impact to cultural resources
- Preserve what are truly historical features

Question 5 – Protect the Natural Environment

- Natural resources are the most vulnerable and the most important
- The only protection to natural resources may be implemented by constructing a tunnel
- Preserve as many trees as possible
- Natural areas are being eliminated along EC Row Expressway and the Spring Garden area
- Concern about air pollution effects on new plantings proposed with the Parkway alternative
- Natural environment analysis looks correct
- Do not sacrifice the natural environment for development
- Natural environment will be worse for some areas and better in other areas

Question 5 – Protect the Natural Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing natural areas as buffers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good job for protecting the environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan does not protect the natural environment; minimize the disruption to the natural environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid natural areas surrounding Plaza A location
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot replace the little natural areas left in Windsor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plaza C impacts the least amount of natural features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a green buffer landscaping with pine trees to help with noise impacts year round
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider using xeroscape landscaping as an option; use native plantings for future planting areas

Question 5 – Improve Regional Mobility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider multi-modal solutions (ie. trucks on trains outside the study area)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fully tunneled highway will improve mobility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider keeping truck traffic separate from local traffic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider emergency services access with each alternative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project will eliminate the need for trucks to start and stop on city streets; a third crossing is needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkway alternative looks like it adequately maintains continuity across the highway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would prefer if the highway would bypass Windsor altogether and build the transportation system elsewhere
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkway alternative preserves local traffic and improves pedestrian traffic; concerned that it cuts off neighbourhoods that could have access to the routes/paths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of crashes in tunnels are less; good argument in favour of end-to-end tunneling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned about being cut off from the east side of Windsor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing the stop lights help; consider merging E.C. Row Expressway and the new access road to the plazas

Question 5 – Cost & Constructability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of tunneling seems to be exaggerated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost should not be a major factor or a defining factor; unacceptable evaluation factor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other six evaluation factors should be considered greater than cost and constructability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windsorites deserve the best that money can buy; since the new crossing will service the economy of Canada
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parkway is a cheap solution; total cost can be recovered quickly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut and cover tunnel is the most costly but it is the preferred solution; solution needs to last for the next 50-70 years

Question 5 – Cost & Constructability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of tunneling is cheaper than the projected cost of health care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The perceived benefit of a tunnel is far outweighed by cost, spend the money on acquisitions and increase buffer zones
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the cheapest solution possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal funding is involved; therefore do not consider a cheap solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windsor is an underserved and underfunded transportation hub for Ontario and Canada into the North American north/south/east/west transportation corridors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost is important but not at the expense of other issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare costs of this project to other large infrastructure projects in Canada (ie. Confederation Bridge)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most efficient use of tax dollars should be considered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If at grade alternative is not be considered; cost for tunnel should not be a factor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for the best solution, not the most cost-effective solution

Question 6 – Other Comments

Comments made by participants when answering Question 6 included:

Question 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new crossing must remain in the public domain, with ownership shared between the governments of Canada and the United States.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windsorites deserve the best solution since we are the gateway of Canada
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start this project tomorrow. Our economy is at a standstill, we need jobs and new money to keep our economy going. Do not consider tunneling. One tunnel is a potential for disaster. You will need two in case of accidents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality statistics are not acceptable especially given the results found in California regarding diesel trucks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambassador Bridge company plans include a twinning of the existing bridge and keeping the roadway to the bridge at grade. The DRIC project does nothing to change this, it only provides a second crossing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad proposal. Not in the best interest of the City of Windsor and its residents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This huge undertaking deserves the most imaginative and innovative solution. The solution should be so impressive to the world that we are seen in the best possible light and the people around the world want to do bigger business in Canada.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not agree with the Parkway alternative; cut and cover tunnel is a better proposal.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned with traffic flow during construction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider wildlife linkages once a final crossing and plaza location is chosen. Consider one to one replacement mitigation for natural areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will provide funding for the continual upkeep of the parkway/policing?

Question 6

- Develop a more progressive, creative and responsible design.
- Your plans do not address our needs.
- Please incorporate bridges and pathways into the design. The bridges for the multiuse pathways are an excellent idea and help eliminate pedestrian/cyclist conflicts with vehicles.
- The proposed plan appears to allow a timely solution.
- This project is bound to get someone angry; this project is difficult; change is needed and change is good.
- Appreciate that the study team updates the public periodically and asks for input in the project.
- Concerned about housing and commercial development along the freeway after construction.
- There will be a beautiful road, plaza and crossing in Windsor.
- Detroit/Windsor tourists do not want to be tunneled into town alongside trucks.

7.0 PIOH 5 Workshop Sign-ups

At the PIOH sessions, the public was invited to register for workshops to be held August 22 and 23, 2007 to discuss any aspect of the project they wished to discuss with the Study Team. In total, **228** individuals attended both of the workshops.



Detroit River International Crossing

Public Information Open House #5
Summary Report

***APPENDIX A -
Flyer Insert and
Public Notice Mailout***



Detroit River International Crossing

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***APPENDIX B -
Newspaper Advertisement***



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***APPENDIX C -
Notes of Advisory Group Meetings***



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APPENDIX D - Display Material/Handout Package