

Partnership of

Canada



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

**Detroit River International Crossing
Environmental Assessment**

**Public Information Open House #6
Summary Report**

June 2008

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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.

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	August 2007
Evaluation of Practical Alternatives & Selection of the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative	PIOH #6	June 2008

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

2.0 Purpose

The sixth round of Public Information Open House (PIOH) meetings were held to present to the public the analysis and evaluation process leading to the selection of the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative (TEPA). The two (2) sessions of PIOH #6 were held as follows:

Wednesday June 18, 2008
2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn Select Hotel, Ballroom
1855 Huron Church Road
Windsor, Ontario

Thursday June 19, 2007
2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Macedonian Community Centre
5225 Howard Avenue
LaSalle, Ontario

The format for the PIOHs was informal drop-in sessions with displays showing the analysis and evaluation completed for the Seven Major Evaluation Factors (Changes to Air Quality, Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics, Maintain Consistency with Existing and Planned Land Use, Protect Cultural Resources, Protect the Natural Environment, Improve Regional Mobility, and Cost and Constructability). The Study Team was available to answer questions, explain the extensive technical work that had been completed, discuss elements of the TEPA, and to receive feedback from the public.

The purpose of the PIOH was to share the latest project information with the public, present the analysis and evaluation process leading to the selection of the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative, and receive comments on the work completed to date. As well, the public was invited to provide their ideas and comments on the analysis and evaluation, leading to the selection of the TEPA. Representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation's property section were available during the PIOH meetings to respond to specific questions regarding property acquisition. Property representatives were situated in a separate and private room which was equipped with plans of the TEPA.

The open house sessions also offered members of the public the opportunity to complete sign-up forms to register for PIOH #6 Workshop sessions to be held later in June.

3.0 Public Notification

Prior to the PIOH #6 meetings, the following notification activities were carried out to notify the public:

1. An advertisement was published in the following newspapers on the specified dates:

<u>Newspaper</u>	<u>Date of Insert</u>	<u>Circulation (approx.)</u>
Windsor Star	Tuesday June 10, 2008	80,000
Harrow News	Tuesday June 10, 2008	1,400
Kingsville Reporter.....	Tuesday June 10, 2008.....	2,200
Essex Voice	Tuesday June 10, 2008.....	6,200
Leamington Post & Shopper	Wednesday June 11, 2008.....	3,600
Essex Free Press.....	Wednesday June 11, 2008.....	3,500
Le Rempart (French).....	Wednesday June 11, 2008.....	7,300
Amherstburg Echo	Thursday June 12, 2008.....	8,300
LaSalle Post.....	Thursday June 12, 2008.....	9,800
Windsor Star	Saturday June 14, 2008	80,000

2. PIOH meeting dates and locations were announced at media events held in advance of the PIOHs. A Media Briefing session was held on June 18th.
3. Notices (see Appendix A) were mailed directly to over 5,800 persons on the Study Team’s general public mailing list as well as project Advisory Group contact lists.
4. 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.
5. Details of the PIOHs were posted on the project website at www.partnershipborderstudy.com in advance of the meetings.
6. 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 for the purpose of presenting a summary of the analysis and evaluation leading to selection of the Technically and Environmentally Preferred access road (The Windsor-Essex Parkway) as well as an update on the analysis of practical plaza and crossing alternatives. The meetings were held as follows:

Municipal Advisory Group	May 15, 2008
Community Consultation Group	May 21, 2008
Schools Advisory Group	May 22, 2008

Notes of these meetings are provided in Appendix B.

5.0 Presentations to Councils

Presentations were made to local municipal councils for the purpose of presenting a summary of the analysis and evaluation leading to selection of the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Access Road (The Windsor-Essex Parkway). The presentations were made as follows:

City of Windsor Council.....	May 26, 2008
Town of Tecumseh Council	May 27, 2008
County of Essex Council.....	June 4, 2008
Town of LaSalle Council	June 10, 2008

6.0 Display Material

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

- The Border Transportation Partnership
- Contact Information – Canadian Study Team
- Purpose of the DRIC Study
- Evaluation Process

- CEAA Process
- Coordination of CEAA & Ontario EA Processes
- Governance
- Chronology of DRIC
- Evaluation Methods
- Study Process
- Illustrative Alternatives Studied
- Practical Alternatives Studied
- Public Information Open House #5
- Results of Consultation – Parkway Refinements
- Summary of Analysis – Access Road Alternatives
- Parkway Connects Communities
- The Windsor-Essex Parkway
- Summary of Analysis – Access Road Alternatives
- Arithmetic Weighting-Scoring Results
- Why Not GreenLink?
- Summary of Analysis – Plaza and Crossing Alternatives
- Canadian Crossing – Plaza Alternatives
- Summary of Analysis – Plaza and Crossing
- Contact Information – U.S. Study Team
- The Windsor-Essex Parkway
- Comparison of Tunnel Lengths and Local Features
- Bridge Type Study
- Bridge Types
 - Plaza B1 Cable Stayed Bridge
 - Plaza B1 Suspension Bridge
- Changes to Air Quality
 - Air Quality Monitoring
- Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics
- Maintain Consistency with Existing and Planned Land Use
- Protect Cultural Resources
 - Archaeological Features
 - Built Heritage Features
- Protect the Natural Environment
 - Vegetation Communities and Fish Habitat & Watercourses
- Improve Regional Mobility
 - Travel Times to Plaza B1
- Cost & Constructability
- Geotechnical Explorations and Analyses – Access Road
- Results of Deep Borehole Drilling – Crossing Locations

- Proposed Construction Mitigation
- Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)
- Property Acquisition – What You Should Know
- Next Steps

In addition, the following video simulations of the TEPA were displayed on monitors:

- Informational video for The Windsor-Essex Parkway;
- Simulated aerial “fly-over” of The Windsor-Essex Parkway.
- Simulated aerial “fly-over” of Plaza B1 and Crossing B.
- Traffic simulation depicting predicted and future traffic conditions in The Windsor-Essex Parkway corridor.

The attendees were provided with a handout package that contained a copy of the display material (see Appendix C), fact sheets and a CD which contained fact sheets, bridge types, images, display boards and TEPA plans. Comment sheets were made available to all attendees. Sign-up sheets for the Workshop sessions were available at numerous locations throughout the meeting room.

7.0 Attendance and Comments

A total of **1,000** 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, **189** written comment sheets were submitted at the PIOHs. In addition, **7** 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
June 18, 2007 – Windsor, Ontario	658	110
June 19, 2007 – LaSalle, Ontario	342	79
Total Comments received via postal mail, fax, e-mail or Study Team website	-	7
Total	1,000	196

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

Question 1 –Please provide any comments you have regarding the evaluation process and choice of the technically and environmentally preferred access road (the Windsor-Essex Parkway) and plaza/crossing (Plaza B1, Crossing B).

Most frequent responses to Question 1:

- Excellent choice; DRIC picked best option considering environment
- Who is responsible for maintenance of parks and green spaces and snow removal?
- Questions why DRIC did not fully evaluate City of Windsor's GreenLink proposal
- Incorporate roundabouts into traffic design
- Start work as soon as possible; no delays; get it done
- Concerned about property value for homes close to proposed route
- Increase amount of tunneling; tunnel whole route; cover more areas
- Question about mitigation measures during and after construction (i.e. noise barriers, fencing around properties)
- DRIC's presentation is best for safety (vehicle breakdown and access), fire protection and ventilation demands
- Add more access points to pathways and walkways as well as to proposed route
- Support for Plaza B1/Crossing B
- Support for City of Windsor's GreenLink proposal
- Move road to less densely populated area

Question 2 – What mitigation methods should be explored as the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative proceeds into the next phase of study/design?

Most frequent responses to Question 2

- Increase depth of below-grade sections; keep trucks below grade level
- More/full tunneling to connect communities and provide community areas on overpasses
- Seriously consider and discuss mitigation measures to lessen noise and pollution impacts (e.g. noise barriers, berms, natural filtration such as trees, shrubs, etc.)
- Concerned about noise and vibration impacts during and after construction; concerned about smog & pollution
- Save the older trees existing in greenspaces
- Requests for sound walls/barriers on properties
- This new route and crossing are needed – get it done

Question 3 – Do you feel that the tunnel locations provide adequate community connections and access to greenspace? If your answer is no, please provide your suggestions for improvements.

Most frequent responses to Question 3

- Tunnels are too short; increase length; join tunnels together; full tunneling
- Suggestions for alternate tunnel locations or modifications to proposed tunnel sections
- Support for DRIC tunnel locations and length; great proposal for the communities
- Incorporate longer tunnels like City of Windsor's GreenLink proposal
- Increase number of trees in greenspaces to help air quality

Question 4 – Please provide your comments on the 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 preferred crossing, plaza, or access road locations?
- Are there any other issues that you feel should be addressed?

Most frequent responses to Question 4 – Changes to Air Quality

- Tunnels are required in residential areas and around schools
- Concerned about air quality, diesel fumes, gas emissions
- Concerned about human health, especially during construction
- Longer tunnels/full tunneling will address air quality concerns
- Support for City of Windsor's GreenLink proposal

Most frequent responses to Question 4 – Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics

- This is one of the most important factors
- Amount of greenspace should be increased; will increase community connections
- DRIC has done a fair analysis; support choice of bridge and plaza
- Concern about value/quality of property close to planned route
- Longer tunnels will connect neighbourhoods and communities

Most frequent responses to Question 4 – Maintain Consistency with Existing and Planned Land Use

- Existing and planned uses should be preserved at all costs
- Ensure planned route is consistent with community plans or planned land use will have to be altered
- Incorporate more green spaces and green links

Most frequent responses to Question 4 – Protect Cultural Resources

- Protect cultural resources at all costs
- Support for DRIC's work in responding to this factor
- Good that DRIC avoided the Sandwich west historic area
- Should increase tree vegetation
- Full tunneling would help continuity and would protect schools, parks and neighbourhoods
- Concerns about property value

Most frequent responses to Question 4 – Protect the Natural Environment

- Provide maximum amount of greenspace as possible; do all you can do
- Good that DRIC avoided Ojibway Park; work to integrate trails for people and wildlife
- This was an excellent and thorough analysis. Great work and great information.
- Increase length of tunnels to protect natural environment areas

Most frequent responses to Question 4 – Improve Regional Mobility

- Improving regional mobility is a very important factor; DRIC has done a good job
- Improvements to regional mobility are desperately needed
- Good work by DRIC – gets trucks off city streets; additional highway gives locals more options
- Concern about bottlenecks at customs

Most frequent responses to Question 4 – Cost & Constructability

- Cost should not be a factor; other factors are more important than cost
- Only have one chance – do it right the first time; will only cost more to fix it in the future
- Concerns that DRIC is focusing too much on cost
- Keep costs down to where it is affordable
- This road project should be a priority for our tax dollars; money should be spent to protect the air quality and health of the surrounding people

Question 5 – Other Comments

Most frequent responses to Question 5
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to listen to the communities and incorporate public input• Cost should not be a factor; built it whatever the cost• Preference for City of Windsor’s GreenLink proposal• Concerned about emergency access to communities and in tunnels• Concerned about impact to property and property values; buy my home• Question about proposed traffic routes/road closures during construction• Support for DRIC Team: excellent presentation; lots of detail; knowledgeable and helpful staff• Suggestions for alternate route locations• Request for more access points to proposed route, service roads and green areas• DRIC should speak with the City of Windsor and both sides should compromise on a solution• Concern for environmental mitigation in the area of the plaza• Preference for at-grade or below-grade roadway without tunneling• Good project; will enhance Windsor; plan looks great; get it done• Consider reverse customs/immigration• More tunneling; more greenspace over highway• Worried about vibration/added vibration with trucks traveling underground

8.0 [PIOH 6 Workshop Sign-ups](#)

At the PIOH sessions, the public was invited to register for workshops to be held June 24 & 25, 2008 to discuss features of the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative and potential impact mitigation strategies with the study team. In total, **110** individuals attended both of the workshops.

***APPENDIX A -
Newspaper Advertisement
and Public Mailout***

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

*APPENDIX C -
Display Material Handout package*