

Partnership of

Canada



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

**Detroit River International Crossing
Environmental Assessment**

**Public Information Open House #7
Summary Report**

December 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
Refinements to the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative, and Presentation of the Recommended Plan including Proposed Mitigation Strategies	PIOH #7	Nov. 2008

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

2.0 Purpose

The seventh round of Public Information Open House (PIOH) meetings was held to present and receive public feedback on the Recommended Plan for the new border transportation system linking Highway 401 in Ontario to a new international bridge. This Recommended Plan consisted of refinements made to the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative (TEPA) since the last round of PIOHs (PIOH #6) and the proposed impact mitigation strategies developed by the study team. The two (2) sessions of PIOH #7 were held as follows:

Monday November 24, 2008
2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn Select Hotel, Ballroom
1855 Huron Church Road
Windsor, Ontario

Tuesday November 24, 2008
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. The Study Team was available to answer questions, explain the extensive technical work that had been completed, and to receive feedback from the public.

The goal of the PIOH was to share the latest project information with the public and receive comments on the work completed to date. Attendees were also invited to provide their ideas and comments in writing to the Study Team via comment sheets.

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.

3.0 Public Notification

Prior to the PIOH #7 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>
Windsor Star	Monday November 10, 2008
Harrow News	Tuesday November 11, 2008
Kingsville Reporter.....	Tuesday November 11, 2008
Essex Voice	Tuesday November 11, 2008
Leamington Post & Shopper	Wednesday November 12, 2008
Essex Free Press.....	Wednesday November 12, 2008
Le Rempart (French).....	Wednesday November 12, 2008
Amherstburg Echo	Thursday November 13, 2008
LaSalle Post.....	Friday November 14, 2008
LaSalle Silhouette	Friday November 21, 2008
Windsor Star (2 nd advertisement).....	Saturday November 22, 2008

2. PIOH meeting dates and locations were announced at media events held in advance of the PIOHs.
3. Notices (see Appendix A) were mailed directly to over 3,295 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 14,300 property owners (as identified on property assessment roll plans supplied by municipalities) and residents, and were delivered to over 12,300 addresses via Canada Post mail walks.
5. Details of the PIOHs were posted on the project websites at www.partnershipborderstudy.com and www.weparkway.ca 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 material that would be shown at the Public Information Open House meetings. These meetings were held as follows:

Canadian Agency Advisory Group	November 12, 2008
Municipal Advisory Group	November 12, 2008
Community Consultation Group	November 20, 2008

Notes of these meetings are provided in Appendix B.

5.0 Display Material

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

- The Border Transportation Partnership
- Purpose of the DRIC Study
- Benefits of The Windsor-Essex Parkway
- CEAA Process & Coordination of CEAA & Ontario EA Processes
- Governance
- Chronology of DRIC
- Evaluation Process
- Illustrative Alternatives Studied
- Practical Alternatives Studied
- Evaluation Methods and Evaluation Factors
- Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative (TEPA)
- Public Information Open House #6 and Workshops
- Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Workshops

- TEPA Refinements
 - Overview
 - Core-Collector
 - Howard Avenue Diversion
 - Highway 3 Roundabout
 - Cousineau and Hearthwood Tunnels
 - Huron Church Line Intersection
- Highway 3 Roundabout and Driver Education on Using Roundabouts
- Background & Impacts – Air Quality
- Mitigation, Future Work & Conclusion – Air Quality
- Impacts & Mitigation – Human Health Risk Assessment
- Mitigation, Summary & Future Work – Protection of Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics
- Protect Cultural Resources
 - Archaeological Features
 - Built Heritage Features
- Background & Predicted Impacts – Noise & Vibration
- Mitigation, Summary & Future Work – Noise & Vibration
- Protecting Natural Heritage
- Impacts, Mitigation & Future Work
 - Fish & Fish Habitat
 - Wildlife & Wildlife Habitat
 - Vegetation & Vegetation Communities
 - Designated Natural Areas
 - Species at Risk
- Landscape Plan
- Cost & Constructability
- Property Requirements
- Property Acquisition – What You Should Know
- Draft Provincial EA Report Review & Review Locations
- Next Steps
- Contact Information – Canadian Study Team
- U.S. Study Progress

The following plan drawings were also displayed:

- Plan drawings depicting the Recommended Plan;
- Plan drawing depicting noise mitigation locations; and
- Landscaping plans.

In addition, the following videos and interactive media were displayed on monitors:

- Informational video for The Windsor-Essex Parkway;
- Interactive map providing plans and simulated images of The Windsor-Essex Parkway;

- Traffic simulation depicting predicted and future traffic conditions in The Windsor-Essex Parkway corridor;
- Simulated aerial “fly-over” of Plaza B1 and Crossing B; and
- Slideshow depicting schematic Windsor-Essex Parkway construction staging cross-sections.

The attendees were provided with a handout package that contained fact sheets and small drawings of the Recommended Plan and a CD which contained a copy of the display material, fact sheets, a drawing of the Recommended Plan, and a copy of the Draft Environmental Assessment Report. Comment sheets were made available to all attendees. Hardcopy handout packages of the display boards were available upon request (see Appendix C).

6.0 Attendance and Comments

A total of **1,478** 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, **429** written comment sheets were submitted at the PIOHs. In addition, **31** 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
November 24, 2008 – Windsor, Ontario	963	264
November 25, 2008 – LaSalle, Ontario	515	134
Total Comments received via postal mail, fax, e-mail or Study Team website	-	31
Total	1,478	429

Attendees were encouraged to provide input to a number of questions on the comment sheets. The following lists the comment sheet questions:

1. Please provide any comments you have regarding the refinements made to the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative (TEPA) since the last round of Public Information Open Houses in June of this year.
2. Please provide any comments you have regarding the proposed mitigation strategies (e.g. noise barriers, buffering aspects, fisheries, etc.) for the Recommended Plan.
3. Do you have any suggestions that should be carried forward for the design and construction phase?
4. Other Comments

The most frequent written responses received are as follows:

- Get started on construction
- Support for GreenLink
- Increase tunneling
- Support for the Recommended Plan; excellent work
- The study team is taking public input into account

- Concern for air quality and health
- Support for noise berms/barriers
- Concern with roundabout
- Support for roundabout
- Concern with safety/access at schools/institutions
- Concerns about noise
- Concern for capacity and traffic patterns
- Support for green space
- Add more greenspace/buffering
- Request for ongoing consultation
- Concern for property value
- Cost should not be a factor
- Minimize expenditure
- Concern about construction impacts
- Consider Ambassador Bridge Corridor
- Concern with noise berms/barriers
- Support for public ownership of bridge
- Use local workforce
- Add more multi-use trail bridges/connections/ access
- Concern that study team is not listening to public
- Support for refinement at Spring Garden
- Tunnel under Turkey Creek
- Requests for property purchase
- Request full evaluation of GreenLink
- Concern with U.S. study status
- Need more mitigation
- Concern re: maintenance of green areas/trail
- Concern about upkeep of vacant properties
- Concern with light trespass
- Request additional access
- Use different corridor

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

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

*APPENDIX C -
Display Material Handout package*