

**Detroit River International Crossing Study**  
**June 30, 2005**  
**Public Meeting Notes**  
**Crystal Gardens – Southgate**

The following notes are of the formal presentation portion of the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) public meetings held on June 27, 28, 29, and 30, 2005. Written comments received at each meeting follow these notes.

The meeting locations were:

- Monday, June 27, 2005 – Martin Luther King Jr. High School
- Tuesday, June 28, 2005 – Southwestern High School in Detroit
- Wednesday, June 29, 2005 – River Rouge High School in River Rouge
- Thursday, June 30, 2005 – Crystal Gardens in Southgate

The meeting of June 30<sup>th</sup> began with remarks by Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano who spoke from prepared remarks, indicating that he was against any bridge in the Downriver area and preferred the Jobs Tunnel which could be done quickly and with little or no public money. His prepared remarks also indicated that he would be supporting legislation at the state level to prevent a bridge in the Downriver area. He indicated that everyone in the area was united against the bridge, including the entire Wayne County Commission. The complete copy of the County Executive's remarks are included at the beginning of the comments section following these notes.

The presentation portion of the meeting then began.

### **Presentation**

Mohammed Alghurabi of MDOT introduced the meeting and the purpose of the study. Bob Parsons of MDOT then explained the public comment process of the meeting, noting at the end of the formal presentation, the public would be provided an opportunity to speak in the order in which they had returned speaker cards to Bob Parsons.

Joe Corradino explained the presentation would address the contents of the "Blue Book" handed out to the attendees. He also noted that the graphics on display at the meeting

depicting the Illustrative Alternatives are included on a CD in the pocket folder at the end of the Blue Book.

Joe Corradino used a PowerPoint presentation to explain the steps in forming Illustrative Alternatives: Step 1) locate plazas on each side of Detroit River; Step 2) connect plazas with proposed river crossings; and, Step 3) connect plaza in U.S. to nearby freeway. He noted that for several alternatives, the plazas are connected to both I-75 and I-275 or I-75 and I-94.

Regine Beauboeuf then reviewed the various crossing issues. She concluded that while a bridge is an option for all proposed crossings, a tunnel is only viable between the Zug Island and Belle Isle.

Joe Corradino then continued the PowerPoint presentation by explaining the use of a technique known as QUANTM to connect U.S. plazas to nearby freeways. He then used a series of oblique aerial photos to illustrate how the various freeway-to-plaza routes and plazas themselves would cover the areas most relevant to the public meeting location. The meeting then turned to public comments/questions.

### **Comments/Questions**

Comment: State Representative Law made the following comments: This process is extremely complicated and challenging. But, a border crossing is not something to have in the Downriver area. You (the audience) do not want it. I am here for the 23<sup>rd</sup> District and I urge each of you to fill out the evaluation forms. Give me the information to fight for you in the Downriver area. It is too precious an area to be impacted by a border crossing. You the community and I will work together to take care of this issue. I am proud to see the room full. We do not want this project Downriver.

Comment: State Representative Farrah stated I am drafting a resolution along with State Senator Patterson for the Michigan Legislature to take a stand against this project. We need to protect our quality of life. A border crossing will damage our quality of life completely.

Comment: Wayne County Commissioner Joe Palamara made the following comments: I am now your County Commissioner, and before that, I was in the State legislature. I have been in

office for 20 years. Never have I seen the Downriver area in so much opposition to anything. MDOT, do yourself a favor by eliminating the Downriver alternatives. What the people want is what really matters.

Comment: By the Mayors and Supervisors of the Downriver communities as introduced by the following comments of the Downriver Community Conference Chairperson, Mayor Durand of Riverview: All the mayors and supervisors standing before you are united in opposition to this border crossing. The Community Conference members from the Downriver community unanimously passed a resolution in total opposition to the project in this area. A viable alternative is the Jobs Tunnel. We don't want the border crossing here because it is a total infringement on our infrastructure and our quality of life.

Comment: Kurt Kobiljak, Supervisor of Grosse Ile, made the following comments: The gathering tonight is truly a unique happening. We are united in opposition to prevent a southern border crossing from happening in the Downriver area. I urge you to keep contacting MDOT on this issue. Go to the Web site and inform them. I didn't realize that King Road was being considered. I was completely blind-sided. Now, I hear that even Vreeland Road may be considered for a border crossing. Placing a bridge over Grosse Ile, the community I represent, is degrading. Our saying is "not on, over or under Grosse Ile."

Comment: Art Wright, Supervisor of Brownstown, made the following comments: Let me have a show of hands on who in this room is opposed to a Downriver border crossing (hands were raised). MDOT should take note of the number of hands raised in opposition to this project.

Comment: Richard Kuhn, Mayor of Gibraltar, made the following comments: Gibraltar is a community of 4,400 people and all are opposed to this proposal. We have been working for 20 years to bring people back to the river. We will keep vigilant. MDOT should dismiss the Downriver alternatives "out of hand."

Comment: Gerald Brown, Mayor of Trenton, made the following comments: Trenton is a community of 19,244 people. We have plans to reclaim the McLouth property that will represent a \$600 million investment. Additionally, on what is known as plaza S1, we have a plan for a \$50 to \$60 million investment. Both plans are stymied by the proposed river

crossing presented by MDOT tonight. The City of Trenton passed a resolution on June 13<sup>th</sup> that it opposes this project. Downriver is a community of fighters. We urge MDOT to drop options S1 and S2 from further consideration.

Comment: Dave Flaten, Mayor of Woodhaven, made the following comments: This project will reduce the quality of life and lower the property values of the Downriver area. Its ripple effect is unknown. Traffic congestion, air quality, water quality, runoff from storm water, all are issues that will affect our quality of life. This presentation tonight demonstrated that King Road is the preferred alternative because the presentation doubled back and focused on it.

Comment: Dennis David, Mayor of Southgate, made these comments: I am stunned at what the slides showed and how wide the path is for the proposed freeway connection between the plaza and I-75 and beyond. The Pennsylvania Road proposal, would wipe out my house. I say no.

Comment: Jim DeSana, Mayor of Wyandotte, made these comments: Our communities are working collectively. This is the second meeting in the Downriver area and it's standing room only. Again, we are concerned that they are looking at the Downriver area when there are so many other options available. Environmental issues are very important. It's not just water, air, cemeteries and homes. Make phone calls and send letters to us so that we can inform MDOT if we've missed anything.

Comment: State Representative Farrah urged those in attendance to sign up so that the full sense of the Downriver community could be felt.

**With those comments by the elected leadership of the Downriver area, the general question/comment period began.**

Comment: Nancy Gratz stated that to really know what a plaza will look like, just observe the Ambassador Bridge. The conditions in that area reflect what will come to the Downriver area. Trash trucks will come down here if there is a border crossing built in the Downriver area.

Comment: Joanna Secco stated the GIS program that was used has ignored the conditions on Grosse Ile. She urged MDOT to take those alternatives off the table.

Comment: Virginia Ann O'Connor asked those from the MDOT study team if they would want this project where they live. She noted that the Downriver communities work hard to have and keep their homes.

Comment: Carol Flanary indicated that, according to the Canadian newspapers, the Canadians are not happy about this border crossing project either. The papers also cite that traffic is actually down.

Response: The analysis being conducted by the border crossing project indicates that there will be a need for a new border crossing somewhere between 2015 and 2033.

Comment: Robert Burns indicated that he is from Grosse Ile, and was born and raised in the Downriver area. He then asked the following rhetorical question: do we really need another bridge, reading from a mid-May *Detroit News* article the criticisms by Dan Stamper, of the Ambassador Bridge Company, of the border crossing study process? Mr. Burns also indicated that the maps and diagrams used in the presentation betray the partiality of the study. He expressed how disturbed he was about the site selection process. He asserted the study ignores the Jobs Tunnel and well as the Mich-Can proposal for a border crossing; each would invest \$300 to \$600 million, none of it being tax dollars. He indicated the evaluation factors and the performance measures illustrate there are many fatal flaws to the Downriver alternatives. These include geologic instability, cultural impacts, open space impacts, construction impacts, use of valuable waterfront real estate, and the fact that no master plan includes a new border crossing. Further, the acquisition of property for the project will cost hundreds of millions of dollars. In the end, he concluded, the Downriver alternatives are equivalent to "one big fatal flaw."

Comment: Nancy Nelson asked why the impacts on Grosse Ile were not described in the presentation material.

Response: The impacts on Grosse Ile, and all other areas being studied, will begin in July.

Comment: Corki Benson stated the MDOT study presenters spoke about the “fabric of the community.” She noted the fabric of the Downriver community “sits in the audience tonight.” They represent the difference between a house and a home. They are worried about the future, about their health, and the health of the environment. They will defend their values. She urged MDOT to not build a bridge in the Downriver community.

Comment: Amy Kohair indicated that she is a lifelong resident of the Downriver area and lives on Grosse Ile. She noted that her home would be under a proposed bridge. She indicated such a crossing will bring darkness and garbage to her area and destroy her quality of life. She asserted this issue “is about America; Downriver is about America.” We enjoy each other and represent generations of residents. Lastly, she stressed the information on display did not show the homes on Grosse Ile.

Comment: Vic DiGrazia indicated that he had looked at the studies posted on the Web site. He noted that data from 1995 to 1998 was used to make the traffic forecasts. He also noted that the Big Three’s business was down; that Detroit has slipped from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> largest city in America; that housing sales are flat; and, the future does not look bright. Finally, he asked if it is true what he read in a set of notes of a recent Local Advisory Council meeting that, specifically, there will be no health impact study for air quality.

Response: The meeting to which Mr. DiGrazia is speaking included the distribution of two letters, one from the Federal Highway Administration and the other from MDOT. advising on a comparable project in southwest Detroit known as the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Project, that there would be no health impact study conducted. The same will apply as to the border crossing study.

Comment: David Boone indicated that Joe Corradino would have flunked a cost-benefit analysis course. He indicated that plaza S1 does not take into account numerous buildings that are on Grosse Ile. He asked: why cross the river at its widest part? He wondered whether Joe Corradino is peddling swampland. He also wondered whether Joe Corradino is being paid by the hour, not the quality of the job.

Comment: Renette Charette indicated that she has lived in Wyandotte for 57 years and the pictures shown tonight illustrate negative impacts. She indicated that driving down Fort Street

is a horrible experience. Trucks have no respect for regular traffic. A border crossing in the Downriver area will create similar impacts on King Road, Pennsylvania Road, Vreeland Road, as well as West Jefferson.

Comment: Thomas Mackowski indicated that a computer model can't measure "the heart of a community." He stated that he is shocked that King Road is being considered an alternative. He also noted the impact on Grosse Ile has not been considered. He concluded by stating that the Jobs Tunnel is feasible and prudent. Nothing that he has heard about the alternatives to use King Road or other Downriver options are prudent and feasible.

Comment: Henry Lick indicated that he had worked in the environmental field all his life. He indicated that the Downriver area is coming back. A bridge in the Downriver area will kill its comeback. Furthermore, he stressed environmental justice issues will be a key concern in this area and locating a border crossing here would be a good case to send to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Comment: James R. Carr asked when will the economic scenarios created by the crossing be considered?

Response: They will be addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the short list of alternatives. Nevertheless, past work in the Planning/Needs & Feasibility Study indicated that without a new crossing, thousands of jobs would be lost in Michigan as well as in Ontario.

Comment: Rosemarie Bojack indicated recent construction on Pennsylvania Road has been horrible for the local residents. She stressed if a border crossing were to occur in the Pennsylvania Road area, it would become another Fort Street because of the trucks and the related deterioration. She concluded by stating that building a bridge in her community would create a haven for terrorists.

Comment: Stephanie Nankervis made the following comments: Since September 11, 2001, homeland security and border patrols are virtually constant at Grosse Ile. Television reports indicate that the Ambassador Bridge is a logical target for terrorism. With a bridge over Grosse Ile and the Fermi nuclear plant nearby, another target for terrorism will be created in Downriver. The quality of life in the Grosse Ile area is tremendous. There are nesting bald

eagles, falcons, ducks, and numerous other birds. If the border crossing were to come to this area, one-half of Grosse Ile will no longer exist. . I have deer in my back yard, and I love the wildlife. There is nowhere else in this region that has these kinds of characteristics but Grosse Ile.

Grosse Ile was established in 1776. It has a long and important history. All of that would be wiped out by a border crossing project

Comment: Robert Ford indicated that if all plazas are connected to freeways, then Grosse Ile will be nothing more than an area burdened by regional traffic. He indicated that, if it is such a great project, it ought to be “given to Wisconsin.”

Comment: Charles Shird indicated that he has been to all four public meetings and that there are 10 times as many people here tonight than at any other meeting. And, there are more elected officials here than at any other meeting. Based on his attendance of the meetings and observation of the process, he made three points: (1) We are all affected by the decision and should consider it carefully; (2) Don Flynn has said different things at each meeting, including that Grosse Ile is an “elitist ghetto;” and, (3) The Atofina chemical plant has had an explosion within the last two years, and received the second largest fine that he is aware of, at \$6.2 million. Why then would somebody put a bridge over a chemical plant? In conclusion, he urged everyone to fill out the evaluation forms; to not listen to Don Flynn as he is simply “selling;” that MDOT recognizes that plaza sites S1, S2, S3 and S4 are not viable; and, finally, that MDOT should not and will not build a bridge in the Downriver area.

Comment: Richard Kudrak stated a bridge in the Wyandotte area or the Southgate area would destroy thousands of businesses and homes. He indicated that he believed the project will work best in Delray, as it is the “biggest wasteland” in Detroit. He asserted it’s the only place that the bridge makes sense. He suggested, if necessary, to level Fort Wayne as it is closed and rotting. He urged: leave the Downriver area alone.

Comment: Ann Hatley indicated that she is a Wyandotte resident as well as a realtor. She noted data indicate that the new border crossing is not needed until 2035. With manufacturing leaving, and the Ambassador Bridge at 90 years old, why not create a “sister span” to it rather than destroy the lives of the Downriver people?

Comment: Kelly Kohlstrand indicated that she lives in Grosse Ile and has never been prouder of the Downriver community. She indicated that the MDOT study team stated that it has a systematic and objective process but then uses subjective forms to establish weights on evaluation factors; this does not make sense. She asked how will the MDOT team weight the evaluation factors and, when applying the factors, how will the Ambassador Bridge come out in the analysis?

Response: The weighting of the factors by the MDOT team, as well as the weighting by the citizens, will be available by Labor Day of this year for public review.

Comment: William Rito made the following comments: Nothing much was said during the presentation about Customs and Inspection. So, how does the federal government intend to staff a new border crossing when the backup of cars and trucks at the Ambassador Bridge is due to a lack of personnel. Building a new facility will stretch Customs even further. Therefore, the backups will still occur.

Comment: Don Flynn indicated "I am the guy everyone loves to hate. I am the guy who is going to build the bridge at Pennsylvania Road." He then indicated that MDOT's work is totally wrong. He urged people to come to his group meetings where they will find out that his proposal will not affect "one single home or business." A plaza will be built to avoid such a situation and then trucks will go down the railroad tracks until they connect with I-75. He indicated that if the audience wanted to know the real facts, to get in touch with him. His proposal will contain everything between West Jefferson Street and the river channel. He listed his phone number as 734.728.0877.

Comment: David Peters indicated that he has been a resident of Wyandotte for eight years. He cited that it was interesting that the presentation indicated the project is in the planning stage but that the slides indicated that the tunnel options have been eliminated. So, options are being evaluated as the project goes on. He noted that the QUANTM model was similar to a mass flow analysis program. He indicated that the study team was more interested in parks and cemeteries and less concerned about wiping out neighborhoods. He contended that the MDOT study team's logic is flawed. He concluded by noting that MDOT does not have a good reputation and cited the Zilwaukee Bridge in terms of budget and other problems.

Question: Jim Skolasinski asked how much of the budget had been spent and if those costs were within expectations?

Response: It is estimated that \$1.5 to \$2 million of the consultant budget has been spent and the project is on target for expenditures.

Comment: Jesse Nagy indicated that Delray is not a “wasteland”. People who think it is are “ignorant.” He noted that all of those in the room have a starting point like Delray. But, people in Delray can’t afford to move and we don’t need a new bridge. He then proposed to fix, with maintenance, the existing Ambassador Bridge as the best solution. He concluded with these remarks: Everyone has a right to express his/her opinion, but if we don’t fight, who will. Fort Wayne is not “worthless.” It has a proud history. It is a reminder of our history of fighting and this is an opportunity to fight for our neighborhoods.

Comment: Theresa Lannen indicated she is a Southgate City Council member. She indicated that a review of the presentation did not show any pictures of the Jobs Tunnel. She asked if it were considered in the analysis.

Response: The concept of the Jobs Tunnel is part of the analysis.

In continuing her comments, Theresa Lannen said MDOT should take advantage of resources like the existing tunnels; it will be cheaper in the long run. She also indicated that the Greenways Initiative in the Downriver area would be affected by every proposed border crossing route. She concluded by hoping that the MDOT study team is “hearing” what is being said. The study team needs to know that there are not many voices saying “MDOT is doing a great job.”

Comment: Henri LaFrance indicated that the Brownstown Township Master Plan is one of many master plans that involves the Downriver community. He explained a master plan is to demonstrate what “unique personality” a community wants. Michigan law requires each community to do a master plan. It is to guide a community to where it is going. He stressed he knows of no master plan with a border crossing bridge in it.

He stressed the bridge will have serious impacts. It will take away local governments’ strategic ability to manage its future; how a community reacts? By building a border crossing

in a community, that community is not given the right to do its job, the right to determine what it wants to be.

He also noted someone was quoted in a newspaper article indicating “nobody’s in opposition to the bridge/tunnel wherever it goes, as long as they get fair property value.” But, he hasn’t heard or seen anyone say that they believe the border crossing is a good idea. He indicated he personally does not believe there is a need for another bridge. Further, he indicated he has a plan to address the problem without a new bridge and invited those who want to know more about it to contact him.

Comment: Sue Murray, the Southgate School Board Treasurer, and a Downriver resident for over 50 years, indicated there are other solutions to the problem, like a double-deck border crossing such as in the San Francisco Bay area, or the Jobs Tunnel. She noted her belief that the Downriver border crossing concepts are designed to provide a shorter route to trash sites for Canadian trucks. The border crossing project will be associated with the use of eminent domain. She asked, rhetorically, what impacts will the project have on schools like the Gabriel Richard School or the Anderson High School or the River Rouge High School? Even if not taken, traffic effects will be a problem. And, she noted the Greenways are affected by each of the proposals. Additionally, she noted there are nature preserves, neighborhood and community concerns. She concluded by indicating that she has been at work for 30 years on improving her home and is very upset that a proposal like the border crossing would come and take her property. She urged the MDOT project team to tell their client that the Downriver area says “no, thank you.”

Comment: Clifford St. Pierre, the chairperson of the Open Space Committee of Grosse Ile, indicated that the proposals offered tonight were not properly thought through. He urged everyone to write or call their elected officials, and demand positive action to eliminate any Downriver bridge from further consideration immediately. He concluded with the analogy of the space program, “when NASA developed a very-high-cost fountain pen to write in space, while the Russians simply used a pencil.”

Comment: Viktor Brown expressed his concern about the resistance to a health impact study. He asked how else can the human environment be defined? Additionally, he indicated no one wants “this boondoggle” in their community. He stressed, if there is a need for a new border

crossing, the logical conclusion is to use existing infrastructure like the railway tunnel. He noted that the impact on property values will extend beyond the immediate pathway of the border crossing facilities, to those in close proximity to it. Finally, he noted that the airport on Grosse Ile would be in close proximity to the bridge and create a terrorist target.

Comment: Gerald Siebierski stated there are three churches and two schools on Church Road in Grosse Ile and they are not on the maps presented at the meeting. He indicated that he is 100 percent against the project; that the expensive homes on Grosse Ile will cost a tremendous amount of money to buy; plus, there will be numerous lawsuits. He concluded by indicating that the presentation did not show the entire picture.

Comment: Philip Leinard indicated the interchange of Sibley Road with I-75 is now being surrounded by large shipping and trucking facilities. As a result, Pennsylvania Road has been converted from a small county highway to a “superhighway.” Lastly, he noted that the proposed plaza area has been bought by Moroun. He asserted that the MDOT study team has already picked the Downriver area.

Comment: Roy Gonzalez indicated that recent Supreme Court ruling on eminent domain indicates that “commercial purposes overrule community purposes.” He also noted his belief that the eminent domain rules in Michigan give citizens certain rights so they will have a final say if the proposed bridge is to go in. Finally, he asked who is your “commercial” client?

Response: The client is the Federal Highway Administration and the Michigan Department of Transportation acting in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport in Ontario and Transport Canada.

Comment: Shirley Elkins indicated that she lives in Lincoln Park and spends a lot of time at the Holy Cross Church in Delray. She stated that there are beautiful people everywhere, including in Delray. She noted the conversation tonight is about the difference in Delray and in southwest Detroit from other areas. She stressed she wouldn’t down anyone who lives on Grosse Ile or Delray. But, she sees people being pitted against each other. She also indicated that she is unclear on the need for a new bridge and concluded by saying people in the Downriver “don’t want it and don’t need it.”

Comment: Ann Gail indicated that she has attended in the last two weeks a number of meetings on the Detroit River International Crossing Study as well as the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Study. She cited the history of her family business and the impact that road closings had on it, but that she doesn't blame MDOT. She indicated that the border crossing project is not about birds and wildlife; it's about people. She also believes that that the area in which she lives is protected from a border crossing proposal because it's an historic district. She stressed that Do Nothing is an option and she questioned whether the border crossing project is really needed. She indicated the project is for big business, the auto companies. She suggested that solving the problem is to move jobs back from Canada to the United States. She indicated that she believes the DRIC Study consulting group is getting \$20 million to do the border crossing study and suggested the money could be spent elsewhere. She urged the audience to get in touch with their state representatives and to have air quality standards set so that a proper analysis will be done. She noted the U.S. Supreme Court decision on eminent domain leads her to propose using that power to make the Ambassador Bridge a public facility. She concluded by urging everyone to be sensitive to the people in Canada and to fight Don Flynn who referred to Grosse Ile as an "elitist ghetto."

Comment: Elaine Pancoast indicated that she loves her house in the Downriver area. She noted that she understands MDOT is doing its job. But, she stressed while the presentation was good, it was "sneaky." She stressed the MDOT team is making a big mistake by doing this to Grosse Ile. It is our own "hidden treasure." She urged everyone to call their neighbors and write their legislators. She concluded by saying the Downriver community knows who's backing this project; it would destroy the Downriver area; and "you have no idea who you are dealing with."

Comment: Lynn James indicated that she, too, lives in the Downriver area. She asked about the Ambassador Bridge's traffic and questioned whether the bottleneck is at the plaza or the crossing. She suggested that the Ambassador Bridge be double-decked or another span be built. She indicated that the area around it is already destroyed. She urged those in attendance to be vigilant and to write to their elected officials.

Comment: Sherry Fricke, Councilwoman from Wyandotte, indicated that she is interested in knowing about state revenues as well as how local revenues would be affected by a border

crossing proposal. She indicated that a Downriver bridge will affect the ability for local communities to pay for police, fire, other services, and infrastructure. She urged those in attendance to keep coming to the meetings. She indicated that no one is in favor of the project. She reiterated that the financial impacts should be considered as they will have a huge burden on the cities and their taxpayers.

Comment: David Hemsworth, speaking to the evaluation form and its factor dealing with the evaluation of neighborhoods, indicated that the impacts on Grosse Ile had not been considered as they had not been shown in the graphics during the presentation. He stressed that shows a disregard for Grosse Ile.

Response: The photos and other graphics used in the presentation demonstrate the paths of the crossings and are not a measurement of the impacts to the community. Those impacts will be measured during the summer.

Comment: Diane Mathias made the following comments: She is a Downriver person who is threatened by this project. She lost her husband four years ago and is now concerned about losing her house and her place in a small community. She lives on Church Road opposite the McLouth plaza proposal and the proposed border crossing would come over her house. The Grosse Ile tax base is dependent on property taxes. She already deals daily with two bridges and they are closed regularly. She concluded by indicating that her “place of living” is being threatened by the proposal which will kill Grosse Ile.

Comment: Gwen Montie asked if notes were being taken, and indicated: she is tired of “ambiguous talk;” that the evaluation forms indicate that there “may be overriding considerations;” and, she questions why government will spend money on a project that eventually they will not own or operate.

Response: Several people are taking notes and when compiled, they will be available on the Web site. Government is responsible for the general welfare of the public and its transportation needs. In order to address that, this border crossing study is being undertaken. Private interests may go forward with their own plans for their interests. But, government’s role is to examine all proposals including those that the private sector may have to determine which would be in the public’s best interest. No decision has been made on the ownership and/or operation of the border crossing facility in terms of whether it will be public or private. If a

border crossing is approved, it is planned to be completed by the end of 2013. There is every intention on the part of government to move this project forward.

Comment: Tim O'Connor indicated he was a Grosse Ile resident. He noted that the MDOT team needs to understand the people in the Downriver area "get lied to, and promised things that do not come." He stressed that a lot of investment is going into the Downriver area, and he noted that the people of the Downriver area are very "cynical." He stressed that Grosse Ile is not a "elite ghetto" but the proposals that have been presented tonight could very well torpedo investment in the Downriver. He advised that the people in the 300-foot path of the alternatives that are being proposed will get acquired if the proposal goes through. But those outside the path are "screwed." He concluded by indicating he was not convinced of the need for a new crossing and that a solution would be to widen the bridge and use existing infrastructure.

Comment: Dave Colling indicated that, if the existing tunnel is viable, why look in the Downriver area? He also indicated that in addition to the existing tunnel, that a tunnel option in the Belle Isle area should be addressed.

Comment: George Lubienski stated that any border crossing must be controlled and owned by the public. He referred to the Ambassador Bridge Gateway Project which is a \$183 million investment to help a private bridge. He urged that public tax money be spent to benefit the public interest.

Comment: John Nagy stated that he lives in Delray, and that he becomes angry when someone says that "Delray is a wasteland." He indicated that such a comment is "ignorant." He noted that: Fort Wayne is under repair and that plans for introducing commercial activity are underway; the West Jefferson Citizens District Council is working on new housing for the Delray area; and, developers are interested in the area. He indicated, using a quote from Henry Ford, that the people of Delray have suffered the ravages of time; but, they are still there and continue to fight. He commented that Delray is starting to come back. He stressed that at the public meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup>, at which a number of Delray citizens attended, no one spoke about putting the crossing in "somebody else's neighborhood." He urged the group to give the people of Delray some respect, that they will fight back. Lastly, he stressed that he is not

convinced of the need for a border crossing and is in favor of a more efficient Ambassador Bridge.

Question: Laura Sells asked who is paying for the study?

Response: The federal government is paying 80 percent, state government is paying 20 percent.

She then asked if that means that the taxpayers are paying for the study?

Response: Yes.

She then asked: Who is going to pay for the bridge, and answered by saying “the taxpayers.” She then asserted that the project would cause local tax revenues in the Downriver area to go down. She concluded that attendance tonight was wonderful, and urged people to contact various representatives mentioning John Dingell, Kathleen Law, and Governor Granholm by name.

Comment: Maria Finn indicated that she had worked at the Ambassador Bridge in a freight forwarder’s office. She stressed that she knows that commerce is important but doesn’t want another bridge because the one now is a problem. She indicated this study must take into consideration safety and that existing facilities need to be fixed. She stressed that a new facility for Customs and Inspection is needed at the Ambassador Bridge.

Comment: Robin Brown indicated that the Downriver communities should contact the media, including John Stossel at ABC and others at CBS and NBC. She mentioned the Downriver community should contact Steve Wilson. She indicated that she is upset that not only is a health impact study needed but it must also deal with mental health. She concluded by indicating her concerns about property values.

Comment: Roseanne Gabrys indicated that the river is “the aorta” of the earth, and that a border crossing will be like a major surgical procedure to the aorta. This will impact the entire planet. She then asked if there is a specific outcome to which the study is now being pointed.

Response: No.

Comment: Tim O’Connor from Grosse Ile spoke again asking if the MDOT Study team could explain what “non-attainment” means. Joe Corradino indicated that the Southeast Michigan

area is defined by the federal EPA as being in “attainment”, “non-attainment” or maintenance for certain pollutions. It is in non-attainment for small particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and it is in “maintenance” (status between attainment and non-attainment) for ozone.

Comment: Ann Hatley indicated that a truck ferry is a viable approach and asked why it is not being studied.

Response: The truck ferry is and has been studied but, even if its capacity were increased, it could not handle the border crossing traffic that is forecast to develop over the next 30 years.

Comment: Sherry Fricke indicated, on the issue of a health impact analysis, that she knows the federal Environmental Protection Agency is doing a study on air quality. She urged that the study team get that information. She concluded by stressing there should be full disclosure of all health impacts for this study.

Comment: Amy Kohair stressed that there should be a health impact study. She indicated that when the Atofina explosion occurred recently, it damaged her lungs, and now anytime that she is near auto exhaust, her lungs hurt. She noted that she moved to Grosse Ile to get better air quality and a bridge over Grosse Ile means she will lose everything. She asserted that this is all due to NAFTA and that the Downriver communities are fighting for their very lives. She concluded by indicating that a new border crossing is not needed.

Comment: Henri LaFrance asked for an explanation of the Do Nothing approach.

Response: It is the baseline against which all other impacts will be measured. It is doing nothing to develop a new border crossing.

Comment: Mr. LaFrance asked a follow-up question, with respect to the demonstration of need.

Response: Members of a group called the Local Advisory Council, of which Mr. LaFrance is a member, were given information in May that indicates the forecasts for need have been updated. They indicate a need exist for more border crossing capacity.

Question: Maria Finn returned to ask, will the public be made aware of the impacts of increased Customs activity?

Response: When the projects are narrowed to a “short list,” more detailed analysis of Customs and plaza issues will be done. That will occur within the next year.

This concluded the public comment period for June 30<sup>th</sup> at the Crystal Gardens in Southgate.

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Detroit River International Crossing  
Public Hearing  
Thursday, June 30, 2005  
Thomas Crystal Gardens, Fort Street, Southgate  
5:00 p.m. doors open  
6:30 p.m. presentation

- Commend the Detroit River International Crossing team (MDOT, Corradino Group, Local Advisory Council and citizens) for meeting during the last few months to establish a process and timeline to study crossing options. These meetings were started in mid April of 2005.
- It is understood that there is a process, taking place over the next couple of years, to identify a preferred alternative to address our border crossing needs. This process takes several accounts into consideration that are outline in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Bi-National Study.
- This process is currently at the point of defining Illustrative Alternatives (the crossing options as defined by all involved in the working group).
- Society is fear driven. During the most recent meeting of the Local Advisory Council, it was announced that MDOT in conjunction with the Corradino Group have identified an additional downriver location for a crossing, the McClouth Steel site, King Road and Jefferson Avenue area, Trenton.

- Residents and elected officials from the downriver area are clear, they oppose any international crossings in the area identified as the Southern Corridor.
  1. The Downriver Community Conference passed a resolution opposing a crossing in the Southern Corridor
  2. The Wayne County Commission also passed a similar resolution
  3. Our local units of government have either passed or are working on resolutions in opposition as well.
  
- Are you identifying new locations downriver because the residents unified and opposed the Hennepin Pointe option? These same residents will also oppose McClouth Steel and any other Southern Corridor curve balls that you throw in their direction. They are unified and they are angry that you want to destroy their quality of life.
  
- Hennepin Pointe should become part of our International Wildlife Refuge that is the first to be established in North America on the Detroit River, thanks to Congressman Dingell.
  1. The North Hennepin Pte. Marsh is owned by the Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy and they have done an outstanding job of maintaining and preserving this marsh for habitat.
  2. The South Hennepin Marsh needs to also be mentioned. The McClouth crossing will potentially cut between the 2 marshes and again, we will lose our ability to preserve habitat.

- There is a proposal to develop the McClouth Steel site by the REI Group. The McClouth Steel site is on the riverfront. REI has a plan to clean up the site and develop it for mixed use.
  1. Literally, a stone's throw away from McClouth is the Black Lagoon. To date, \$7 million in state and federal money has been spent to clean up the Black Lagoon. It is being cleaned and restored. The downriver communities will benefit from this project. This project is exciting and has great potential. Why invest money to clean it up if the plan is to put a crossing at the McClouth Steel site? According to NEPA, all environmental, health, and ecological factors must be considered.
  2. How many residents and businesses will be affected by the McClouth plan? Obviously the traffic has get from I-275, I-94, and I-75 to this crossing.
  3. Why destroy the Trenton Channel?
  4. Grosse Ile will not exist, as we know it today if the McClouth or Hennepin Pointe options come to fruition. These crossings will destroy their environment and economic value.
- Finally, there are also some crossing options that have been identified in the Riverview/Wyandotte areas. The opinion is known on the first option, Hennepin Pointe. The option that runs through the South end of Fighting Island will adversely impact the area as well.
  1. The ingress, from the US side, is identified as either the Atofina Chemical site or Wyandotte

Shores Golf Course (possible plaza locations). Wyandotte has done a great job of turning a former industrial site into a recreation opportunity. Again, this location will take away another chunk of shoreline that is accessible to the public.

2. Wayne County has a major issue with these locations because they abut on the County's Downriver Waste Treatment Facility that serves 13 communities. EPA requirements, to operate this facility, are forever changing. The EPA has put forward a proposal for "blending". If adopted, Wayne County will be forced to expand this facility to meet new storage and treatment requirements for sewage and storm water. A border crossing in this area will prohibit the potential expansion that will have the least impact on the local community.
3. Fighting Island, 1500 acres, is becoming a gem. Historically, Fighting Island was used for disposal of alkaline byproducts from approximately 1924-1980. Formerly owned by Wyandotte Chemical, BASF acquired this company in 1967. BASF stopped making soda ash in 1982 and began a plan to develop and restore this site. Since the restoration began the island has:
  - A return of plant life
  - Return of waterfowl
  - Return of wildlife (i.e., mink, different species of birds, deer, coyote and etc.)

- Reduction of erosion on the shoreline has increased the opportunity for fish habitat.

Finally, I want to encourage MDOT and the Corradino Group to be more patient with all the communities as you go through this process. The timelines and study process need to be more clearly defined to the public. Thank you.

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