



Canada-United States-Ontario-Michigan Border Transportation Partnership

Social Impact Assessment

The Recommended Plan Analysis

Technical Memorandum

December 2008

1. Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to update the information contained in the Social Impact Assessment - Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative (TEPA) report. The purpose of that report was to summarize the assessment of impacts and proposed mitigation for the TEPA (i.e. The Windsor-Essex Parkway, Plaza B1 and Crossing X-10B).

Subsequent to the preparation of the above noted report several refinements were developed based on further technical analysis and stakeholder consultation with the objectives of further enhancing the benefits or mitigating the effects of the TEPA. These refinements together with a description of how the refinement improves the TEPA is discussed in the next section of this memorandum.

The combination of the TEPA and associated refinements along with the proposed mitigation measures are referred to collectively as the Recommended Plan.

2. TEPA Refinements

Core-Collector

The Windsor-Essex Parkway alignment has been shifted to integrate The Windsor-Essex Parkway into the E.C. Row Expressway corridor, further away from the Spring Garden area.

Key benefits of this refinement include the following:

- Distance between the new freeway and Spring Garden Road is increased by up to 60 m.
- Reduces impact to predominantly forested natural areas by 25 acres (10 hectares).
- Elimination of ramp west of Malden Road reduces visual impact.
- Provides larger buffer area for Spring Garden residents.
- Preserves areas of significant wildlife habitat.

This refinement is a benefit relative to the original TEPA from a social impact perspective as the intrusion into the Spring Garden area is decreased which therefore reduces the potential for nuisance effects (dust, noise, aesthetics). The enhanced greenspace buffer and proposed noise barriers along the right-of-way will mitigate potential noise effects. Additional detail on the predicted noise effects is available in the *Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment – The Recommended Plan Analysis - Technical Memorandum, December, 2008*. Moving the traffic closer to the existing E.C. Row Expressway reduces the potential for traffic related air quality impacts (dust) to the Spring Garden area. Additional detail on the predicted air quality effects is available in the *Air Quality Impact Assessment – The Recommended Plan Analysis – Technical Memorandum, December 2008*. Changes to community character and cohesion are not anticipated as a result of this refinement, relative to the original TEPA.

Howard Avenue Diversion

The southern portion of Howard Avenue has been diverted to The Windsor-Essex Parkway interchange.

Key benefits of this refinement include the following:

- Regional traffic is diverted away from Howard Avenue.
- Regional mobility improvements with direct connection of Howard Avenue to the Windsor-Essex Parkway / Highway 3 interchange.

This refinement provides a benefit from a social impact perspective to the remaining Howard Avenue residents due to a reduction in traffic volumes along Howard Avenue. For residents living on Howard Avenue this improvement may result in an increase in community satisfaction, enjoyment and use of property, and an enhanced community character.

Highway 3 Roundabout

A roundabout is included in The Windsor-Essex Parkway/Howard Avenue Diversion/Highway 3 interchange.

Key benefits of this refinement include the following:

- Optimum traffic operations at this junction.
- Reduce number and severity of collisions.
- Reduced engine idling.
- Reduced traffic queuing.
- Potential location for gateway features.

This refinement provides a benefit from a social perspective as compared to the original TEPA, given the potential of the roundabout to act as a gateway feature. This gateway feature is likely to enhance the character of the broader communities. Although Ontario motorists are unfamiliar with this type of traffic feature, signage and general education initiatives will help the public adjust to this beneficial refinement.

Cousineau and Hearthwood Tunnels

The location and length of tunnels at Cousineau Road and Hearthwood Place has been revised.

Key benefits of this refinement include the following:

- Enhanced community connection across Cousineau tunnel.
- Eliminated constructability concerns associated with "L-shaped" tunnel.

This refinement is a benefit from a social impact perspective because it provides an enhanced connection between communities via the strategic placement of the Cousineau tunnel.

Huron Church Line Intersection Relocation

A cul-de-sac design for local residential access and relocation of the proposed Huron Church Line intersection has been incorporated. Expanded buffer zones have been provided.

Key benefits of this refinement include the following:

- Increased buffer for residents near the intersection of Huron Church Line and the new service road.

- Safer and more convenient access for residences in close proximity to the intersection.
- Minimized roadway curvature on Huron Church Line.

This refinement is a benefit from a social impact perspective because residents living on Huron Church Line serviced by the cul-de-sac will experience the benefits identified above. The improvements to this section of Huron Church Line may result in an improved level of satisfaction for residents due to the reduction in traffic past their properties and the corresponding reduction in nuisance effects. Improved access to the greenspace and recreational space provided both adjacent to The Windsor-Essex Parkway and across the Huron Church Line tunnel may also contribute to increased satisfaction and collectively to an improved quality of life.

Expanded Windsor-Essex Parkway Buffer Zones

Expanded buffer zones have been provided at various locations along The Windsor-Essex Parkway corridor.

Key benefits of this refinement include the following:

- Additional separation between residents and the new freeway and service road.
- Increased green space creation.

There are approximately an additional 20 properties compared to the original TEPA that will be displaced by this refinement. However, the majority of these displacements are at the request of residents during continued consultation. It is not anticipated that the effect of these displacements will result in a more adverse affect from a community character or cohesion perspective to the communities in which the displacements occur as compared to the original TEPA. The displacement of these additional properties will result in increased buffer zones and improved connections for remaining residents.

3. Conclusion

Both the original TEPA and the Recommended Plan provide benefits to the broader communities and to the neighbourhood communities adjacent to the right-of-way. In general, the benefits provided by the refinements to the TEPA include additional separation between residents in the Spring Garden area and The Windsor-Essex Parkway and a resulting reduction in the potential for nuisance effects. The number of additional residents displaced due to the refinements is a result of additional technical analysis and stakeholder consultation within specific neighbourhoods. It is not anticipated that community character or cohesion will be adversely affected by the Recommended Plan as compared to the original TEPA.

The Recommended Plan continues to enhance connections and recreation opportunities between residents and communities with the greenspace buffer adjacent to the right-of-way and the strategic placement of 11 tunnels.