



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

# **Existing and Planned Land Use**

**The Recommended Plan Analysis**

**Technical Memorandum**

**December 2008**

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to update the information contained in the *“Practical Alternatives Evaluation Assessment Report - Existing and Planned Land Use, (May 2008)”* report that was released in May 2008. Since the release of the May Report, the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative (TEPA) has been developed (i.e. The Windsor-Essex Parkway, Plaza B1 and Crossing X-10B). In addition, 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. This memorandum summarizes the assessment of impacts associated with the Recommended Plan as well as the proposed mitigation measures that have been developed.

## 2. Assessment of Impacts Associated with the Recommended Plan

The impacts associated with the original TEPA are summarized in a report entitled *“Practical Alternatives Evaluation Assessment Report - Existing and Planned Land Use, (May 2008)”*. In comparison to the original TEPA, the Recommended Plan does not result in any adverse effects to existing or planned land uses.

The refinements to the TEPA included within the Recommended Plan are summarized below:

### 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.

### 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.

#### **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.

#### **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.
- Maintains overall length of tunnelling in this area.

#### **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 residences 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.

#### **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.

When examining the various Official Plan policies, the Recommended Plan is consistent with the development strategy, healthy communities, environment, land use, infrastructure, urban design and heritage conservation policies of the *City of Windsor Official Plan* and greenway land use policies of the Town of LaSalle. The Recommended Plan provides opportunities to connect communities and provide new open space and parklands in areas that previously did not have such land uses. In addition, The Recommended Plan provides opportunities to create new recreation land uses, as supported in the *Town of LaSalle Official Plan*.

The proposed plan will not have a significant impact on the development plans outlined in the Official Plans of the *City of Windsor, Town of Tecumseh, Town of LaSalle, and Essex County*. Opportunities to minimize potential property impacts associated with The Recommended Plan will be reviewed during subsequent design stages in consultation with municipalities.

The Windsor-Essex Parkway with its provision for buffer space adjacent to the corridor, and the opportunities for various recreational land uses such as trails and greenspace is consistent with local municipal planning policies.

Overall, potential impacts could result from land use being changed from either residential, commercial, open space, industrial, or vacant to a transportation-related use.

### 3. Recommended Mitigation Measures

In terms of mitigation measures for land use, an Urban Design and Landscape Plan has been prepared (*Urban Design and Landscape Planning Report – Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative, December 2008*). This Urban Design and Landscape Plan sets out the principles that will guide the planning and design of the open spaces, natural areas and trails associated with The Windsor-Essex Parkway, plaza and crossing. In addition, this plan documents and outlines a strategy for including aesthetic and design considerations in new construction, including, but not limited to, structural elements, landscaping, barriers, wayfinding, and lighting.

Context sensitive solutions will be considered on the landscape design developed adjacent to residential properties bordering The Windsor-Essex Parkway and plaza as well as other types of land uses that will be adjacent to the proposed facility at completion. The report also identifies principles that will be considered in the urban and landscape design of areas adjacent to these uses.

These mitigation measures will improve the visual character, aesthetic presence and landscape impact of The Windsor-Essex Parkway and thereby help to address the overall goal of improving the quality of life for residents achieved through buffering the communities from the roadway. The result of the landscape and visual impact mitigation will be a landscape that is unified, green, connected, integrated, and functions as a culturally significant gateway.

### 4. Conclusion

In summary, the Recommended Plan provides opportunities to develop new open spaces, natural areas and which can be made consistent with the existing and future the land use envisioned for the City of Windsor, Town of Tecumseh, Town of LaSalle and Essex County

through the development of an integrated Urban Design and Landscape Plan during later design stages.