

BACKGROUND

Windsor/Detroit River International Crossing – Timelines

Ontario, Michigan and the U.S. and Canadian governments have formed a bi-National partnership to address congestion at the Detroit-Windsor border crossing. The partnership has established a five-stage process to address cross-border congestion today and in the future.

- The **first stage** was completed with the publishing of the Planning/Need and Feasibility Study in January 2004. The study confirmed that growth in border crossing traffic would necessitate a new or expanded international crossing in about 8 to 10 years.
- The **second stage** of the process was completed on September 17, 2004 with the approval of the Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference (TOR) by Ontario's Minister of the Environment. The TOR is a requirement of the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*. A draft TOR was made available for public comment in March 2004. In response to requests from some municipalities in the study area, the review period for the draft TOR was extended to April 30, 2004. Public information open houses were held during the week of March 22, 2004, and written comments were received from a variety of stakeholders. Comments received through the consultation period were considered in the final TOR, which was submitted to the Minister of the Environment on May 20, 2004.
- The **third stage** of the process is to conduct the formal Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact (EA/EIS) studies. This international transportation improvement project will require approvals from governments on both sides of the border. The governments involved have developed an integrated study process that will meet the requirements of the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*, the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, and the U.S. *National Environmental Policy Act*. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to secure a Canadian consultant team while the Michigan Department of Transportation will lead the acquisition of the U.S. consultant team. It is anticipated that the successful consultants will be under contract by early 2005.

The EA/EIS stage will take approximately three years to complete and will result in specific recommendations to address cross-border transportation demands for a 30-year planning period. The partnership will ensure that stakeholders and individuals have opportunities to provide input.

B O R D E R T R A N S P O R T A T I O N P A R T N E R S H I P

- The **fourth stage** will include detailed design of a new or expanded border crossing and property acquisition. The **fifth stage** – construction of the approved plan is expected to be completed in eight to 10 years.

For further information on the study to date, please visit the project web site at www.PartnershipBorderStudy.com.

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