

Q1 I attended the public information session on Saturday, February 18, and am concerned that there was no formal presentation or information packages available.

A1 As you may be aware, Saturday's meeting was organized by the City of Windsor, and the display boards and maps were prepared by Sam Schwartz Engineering on behalf of the City of Windsor. The public should expect different options within the Talbot Road/Huron Church Corridor to be presented by the DRIC study team for comment at the end of March.

Q2 At Saturday's meeting, I was told the DRIC team is not even considering a tunnel, however on one of the displays I saw that the proposed route goes right through my property.

A2 The DRIC team is **considering a tunnel** as one of options within the Talbot Road/Huron Church corridor. In November, the DRIC study team announced that it was proposing a 6-lane freeway in the Talbot Road/Huron Church corridor. We have committed to present specific options within the corridor in late March. These options are still being developed, but are expected to include a tunnel, a depressed freeway, and an at-grade freeway, as well as options with, and without service roads. Alternative locations and configurations for interchanges are also being developed. Meetings such as these are being held to seek community input on all options. By the end of March 2006, we will have a better idea which properties might be affected. We will develop those options in more detail throughout 2006.

Q3 Are you seriously considering a tunnel, or is this all about cost?

A3 Cost is only one of seven factors to be considered in the evaluation of alternatives. We are **not looking for the lowest cost solution**. We are looking for the best balance of benefits and impacts and have committed to study the benefits, impacts and feasibility of a tunnel, but we have not promised to build a tunnel. Tunnelling is just one of several options that will be considered within this corridor. The project team will consider the benefits and impacts of all alternatives that are carried forward for further analysis, based on the seven evaluation factors, as identified in Q5 (see below). This decision will not be based on any single factor. Consultation with the community will help our understanding of community concerns and values.

Q4 I liked the Schwartz Report's connecting route better. Why aren't you just using that?

A4 Our proposal is consistent with the Schwartz Report in the use of Talbot Road; the proposal for a plaza at Brighton Beach; the proposal for a bridge in the industrial area of West Windsor; and the proposal for a road parallel to E.C. Row. The only difference in our proposal from the Schwartz Report is our proposed use of a 2-kilometre section of Huron Church Road, as opposed to the tunnel under the protected Ojibway Prairie nature areas as recommended by Schwartz.

Q5 What are the seven factors that are being considered when conducting further analysis?

A5

1. Changes in Air Quality
2. Protect Community and Neighbourhood Characteristics (includes noise, business, community features)
3. Maintain Consistency with Existing and Planned Land Use
4. Protect Cultural Resources
5. Protect the Natural Environment
6. Improve Regional Mobility
7. Minimize Cost

The evaluation will be considered in the context of the international and national significance of the Detroit River crossing in terms of the economy, security, and ability to provide continuous river crossing capacity. Any alternative to be considered must meet the project purpose and be in the overall public interest.

Q6 You say you considered various alternatives for the access road corridor but it seems like you have just followed existing corridors to the river. Why aren't you looking more closely at options outside of the existing corridor, for instance in the land in LaSalle?

A6 In June 2005, we presented 15 river crossing alternatives, associated inspection plazas and access roads for public consultation. Some were located outside the City of Windsor, and some within the Town of LaSalle. The analysis and evaluation, carried out between June and November, concluded that the Talbot Road/Huron Church corridor provided the best balance of benefits and impacts, when compared to other alternatives.

Q7 I heard you are looking for the least expensive solution. Are you more concerned about cost than our community?

A7 We are not here to find the least expensive solution, or the most expensive solution. The Border Transportation Partnership is working with the community to find the solution that provides the best balance of transportation benefits and environmental (including community) impacts. As taxpayers, we all expect our public funds to be spent wisely, and we expect governments to make responsible fiscal decisions. Cost is only one of seven important factors we are considering throughout the EA process.

Q8 Why would you choose to construct a corridor to a new border crossing along an area that is already burdened with a border access route that generates noise and air pollution?

A8 The Partnership will make decisions based on the need to provide for the safe, efficient and secure movement of people and goods across the Canadian-U.S. border while maintaining acceptable local traffic movement and minimizing impacts to the affected communities.

Impacts on air quality and noise conditions will be studied in more detail during the evaluation of alternatives within the Area of Continued Analysis. The project team will predict the air quality impacts and noise impacts that could occur for each alternative.

Q9 You have talked about mitigating impacts to the Ojibway nature area. What about mitigating impacts on children and other residents in South Windsor? Isn't the health of people just as important as sustaining prairie grass?

A9 All of these issues are very important. The Ojibway Prairie is an important environmental feature, and a significant community resource. Some would argue that the prairie also contributes to the health of the community. As we move through the next stage of the study, we will investigate air quality issues in more detail. This work will help to assist in everyone's understanding of the impacts of the proposed transportation facility.

Q10 Where are you going to locate interchanges along the proposed route? I want to make sure I can still access my home.

A10 At this time, no decisions have been made regarding the specific features of the access road, including the location and layout of the interchanges. Our intention is to construct a six-lane freeway to carry international traffic from Hwy 401 to the new river crossing. The DRIC study team is working with municipalities, local community groups and the public, to develop options for this access route. Service roads, interchanges and grade separations are being considered. Specific options are being developed for public comment for the end of March 2006. These options will be evaluated throughout the rest of the year.

Q11 Should I put money into my house if it is just going to get expropriated?

A11 Proceed as usual. The property procurement process is long and complicated and we are not in a position to start doing full-scale property acquisitions as this time.

While developing alternatives, the project team is keeping in mind the need for a high level of transportation service, but also seeking to avoid impacts on existing features as much as possible. Once corridor options are identified, the team will assess impacts and look at ways to protect houses, businesses and other features that remain, and to address the loss of features and properties that must be removed. Consultation with homeowners will continue throughout the study.

Q12 What is the basis of compensation for property that may be acquired?

A12 Compensation is based on the market value of the property. Market value is ascertained by determining what similar property might be expected to sell for in the open market by a willing seller to a willing buyer. If only a portion of the property is required, the effect of the acquisition on the rest of the property will be taken into consideration. The Ministry of Transportation is required to compensate a property owner according to the provisions of the Expropriations Act. Upon final settlement, there are also provisions for payment of other reasonable expenses actually incurred. Once an appraisal of the owner's property has been completed, a ministry real estate officer will be in contact to present an offer of compensation, based on the appraisal report.

Q13 Why does the access road have to be six lanes?

A13 Our study mandate is to provide a connecting route from Hwy 401, to an inspection plaza and river crossing, to a U.S. inspection plaza and connection to the U.S. freeway system. Keeping in mind current and future traffic flows, we have determined a six-lane facility will best meet traffic needs in the Windsor-Detroit gateway. We need to plan for a facility that provides for all local and international traffic, and to ensure there is enough flexibility in the plan to allow for future growth.

Q14 Why have you decided to focus on this Area of Continued Analysis?

A14 In June 2005, we presented 15 river crossing alternatives, and associated plazas and access roads for public consultation. The analysis and evaluation, carried out between June and November, concluded that access route, plaza and crossing alternatives in the Area of Continued Analysis provide a good balance of transportation service and mobility, with fewer associated community and environmental impacts, in comparison to other alternatives.

Given the nature and extent of land uses and development along the Detroit River in Canada and the U.S., it will not be possible to develop a new or expanded river crossing, plaza and connecting roads that entirely avoid impacts on local communities. The goal of the Partnership is to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to the extent practicable.