

Straight Talk on...

Why NOT Other Alternatives?

In November 2005, the Border Transportation Partnership announced that it would concentrate future study of a new border crossing, inspection plazas and access roads to a central "Area of Continued Analysis." This area was identified after the team spent several months carefully evaluating 15 river crossing alternatives based on a set of criteria jointly established by study teams in Canada and the United States. Each alternative was assessed according to how well it fit the needs of both Canada and the United States.

Here are the facts as to why these alternatives were eliminated from further study:

Detroit River Tunnel Partnership (DRTP)

- The capacity provided by the Detroit River Tunnel Partnership's two-lane truckway proposal does not meet the region's long-term needs. Quite simply, two lanes are not enough to accommodate future traffic growth at the border.
- The DRIC study team also looked at a six-lane freeway in the same corridor as the DRTP proposal. This option was eliminated because it would cut through a significant number of Windsor's residential neighbourhoods and would replace existing low-volume rail line with a major freeway, with direct and indirect impacts on more than 2,300 businesses and homes.

Ambassador Bridge Twinning

- Twinning the existing Ambassador Bridge would require an expanded 100-acre inspection plaza to be located in the very heart of historic Sandwich Towne, adjacent to the University of Windsor. The access road would also be an issue, requiring either the conversion of all of Huron Church Road to a six-lane freeway, or construction of a new route through historic Sandwich.
- More than 500 homes and businesses would be displaced and another 3,500 would be disrupted. Based on the community impacts of the access road and inspection plaza, the option to twin the Ambassador Bridge was eliminated.

Southern River Crossings

- 6 southern alternatives were eliminated from further consideration because these alternatives were located too far downriver to attract cross-border truck traffic, including the 50% of trucks that are local, and therefore would not improve regional mobility.

Eastern River Crossings (Lauzon Parkway / Grosse Pointe)

- This crossing would not provide as much regional mobility improvement as crossings in the ACA and it would have higher community impacts. It was not carried forward for further study.

Since November 2005, the DRIC study team has met with stakeholder groups and conducted additional work. Based on the work conducted to date, we are carrying forward five options for the access road, three inspection plazas, and three river crossings for further analysis and community consultation. We will continue to coordinate the studies with U.S. partners to achieve our mutual goal of identifying a single workable end-to-end solution from Highway 401 in Windsor to the Interstate system in Detroit by mid-2007.