

Next Steps

The Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study team reached an important milestone on May 1, 2008, with the announcement of the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative for the Canadian access road. The Canadian access road is a critical component of the new end-to-end border transportation system. The Preferred Alternative – The Windsor-Essex Parkway – will connect Highway 401 to a new Canadian inspection plaza and new international river crossing.

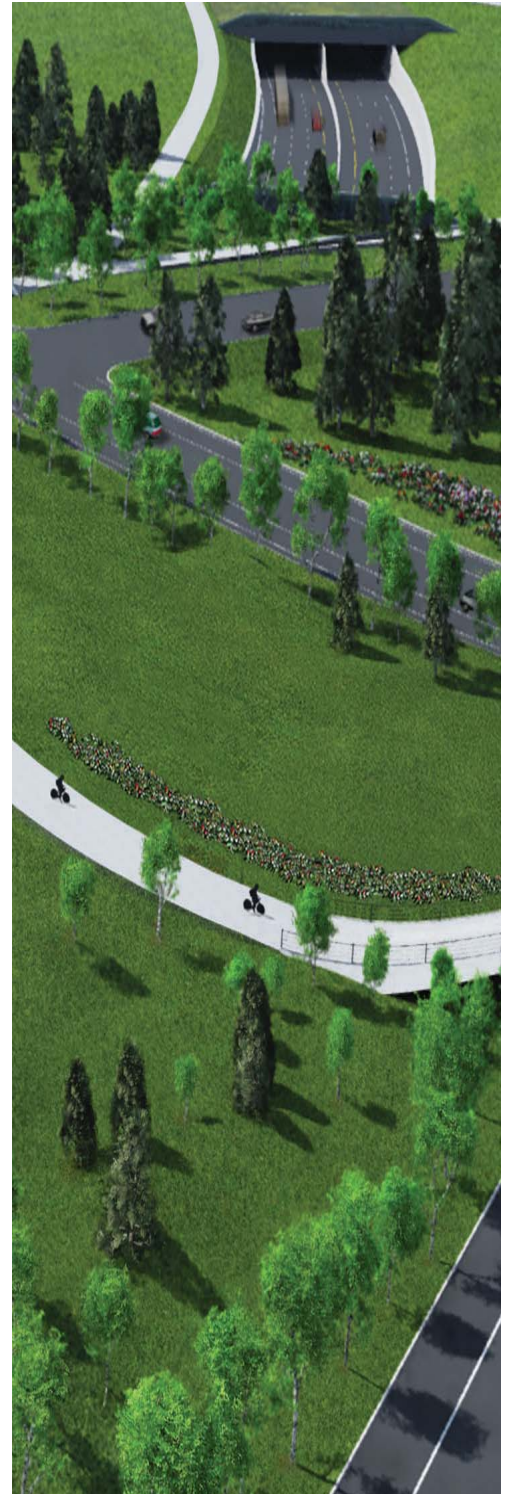
The DRIC study team completed extensive technical analysis on The Windsor-Essex Parkway to the same level of detail as the initial five access road alternatives. The study team feels this is the solution that provides the best balance of benefits and impacts to meet the community objectives and transportation needs in this important trade corridor.

The Windsor-Essex Parkway

The DRIC study team wants to hear your thoughts, ideas and feedback on how to fine tune The Windsor-Essex Parkway. Over the next few months the study team will hold Public Information Open Houses, conduct workshops, meet with community groups, and review feedback. The study team will present an overview of the Parkway, provide opportunities for community input, listen to your suggestions, and make adjustments as appropriate.

The End-to-End Border Transportation System

Later this spring, the U.S. and Canadian DRIC study teams together will present the Technically and Environmentally Preferred Alternative for the entire end-to-end border transportation system. This announcement will include the preferred location for the new river crossing, the locations of the U.S. and Canadian inspection plazas, the interchange connection to Interstate 75 in Michigan as well as The Windsor-Essex Parkway.



Approval Process

In Canada, the DRIC study will require approvals under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act (OEAA) and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA).

All of the work that the DRIC study team has completed to date is part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. This work together with community feedback obtained from upcoming open houses and workshops will be documented in the final EA Report, which will include the configuration of the recommended access road, together with the recommended plaza and crossing locations. The EA Report will also document mitigation approaches developed to address specific issues and concerns associated with the recommended solution. It is expected that the EA Report will be submitted to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment by the end of this year. The formal review process also provides opportunities for public comment.

At the same time, the final EA Screening Report will be submitted to federal authorities for review under CEAA. Opportunities for public comment will follow.

Once the EA Report is approved, construction on The Windsor-Essex Parkway can begin.

Ontario is fully committed to funding its share of the costs for The Windsor-Essex Parkway and is currently exploring various delivery methods including alternative financing and procurement. The federal government has committed an initial \$400 million on its investment of 50 per cent of the eligible Windsor-Essex Parkway costs.

This important infrastructure project will create approximately 12,000 project-related jobs, with the majority of the jobs in the Windsor-Essex region.

For more information on The Windsor-Essex Parkway visit www.weparkway.ca

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