

Session: **Public Information Centre #3 Summary**Date: **November 24, 2009**Location: **Royal Canadian Legion, Upstairs Hall**
383 Morningstar Avenue, WellandTime: **4 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

Introduction

The first of three events for the third round of Public Information Centres (PICs) for the Niagara to GTA Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment (EA) Study was held on Tuesday November 24th, 2009 at the Royal Canadian Legion in Welland. The format of the PICs was an informal drop-in centre (open house) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Representatives of the Ministry of Transportation (Roger Ward, Terry Hilditch, Robin Ashdown, Frank Williams, George Ivanoff, Sam DiFelice, Liza Tharratt, and Will Mackenzie), URS Canada Inc. (Paul Hudspith, Patrick Puccini, Tyler Drygas, Margie Gonzalez, Leslie Leamen, Geoff Coy, and Joanne Wang), AECOM (Paula Neto and Alan MacDougall), MRC (Jack Thompson), Ecoplans (Sandy Nairn), MKI (Jeff Lehman) and Lura (Liz Neild) staffed the PIC.

Purpose of the PIC

The purpose of the PIC was to present the transportation alternatives under consideration in the Niagara to GTA Corridor and obtain feedback from the public.

The information presented at the PIC was grouped under the following headings:

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Background and Existing Conditions
3. Problems and Opportunities Overview
4. Transportation Alternatives
5. Next Steps
6. First Nations

Attendance and Comments

A total of 99 members of the public chose to sign the visitor's register for the PIC. Several additional members of the public attended the PIC but chose not to sign the register. In addition to verbal comments, the Study Team encouraged visitors to express, in writing, all suggestions, comments or concerns that they had regarding the information presented. Nineteen (19) written comments were received at the PIC.

Summary of What We Heard

1. Many attendees noted that the displays were clear and appreciated the provision of the CD to take the information home.
2. Several attendees noted that they were impressed with the amount of information on the other modes of transportation and acknowledged that a considerable effort had gone into research.
3. With regard to goods movement, freight rail was seen by most to have the most promise in terms of diverting goods from trucks to other modes of transportation.
4. Questions regarding the timing for implementation of the recommendations that emerge from this study.

5. A number of attendees asked how recommendations that are not within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transportation will be addressed.
6. Attendees questioned the coordination between Provincial Ministries.
7. Attendees raised the question on how regional or municipal studies will fit into the NGTA Study.
8. Attendees would like to see a dialogue between the NGTA Study Team and need for consideration of climate change issues in the NGTA study.
9. A number of attendees would like to see a decision on new/improved infrastructure made by the Government.
10. Most attendees acknowledged the need to go beyond Group 1 (Optimize Existing Infrastructure) and Group 2 (New/Improved Non-Road Infrastructure). Preference for Group 3 (Widening Existing Inter-Regional Roads) and Group 4 (New Road Infrastructure) was generally equal.
11. Attendees questioned the need for a new corridor in a region where growth is limited with a large retiree population.
12. Discussions regarding the lack of transit initiatives in the Niagara Region. Attendees understood that it is due to lower land use densities in the region.
13. Many attendees expressed the need to consider protecting agriculture and source water areas.
14. A number of attendees felt that highway shoulders should only be available for emergency service vehicles and not as bus bypass lanes.