

The **third Community Advisory Group (CAG)** meeting regarding the Niagara to GTA Corridor Planning and EA Study was held on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at the Casablanca Winery Inn from 6:45 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.

### Attendance

A total of 27 members of the CAG attended the meeting. Regrets were received from 5 members.

Representatives from the Project Team included the Ministry of Transportation (John Slobodzian, Terry Hilditch and Frank Williams), URS, TSH, MRC and Ecoplans. Independent facilitator from Lura Consulting, Sally Leppard facilitated the meeting.

### Purpose

The meeting was held as an information seminar on Travel Demand Forecasting and Modelling.

### Discussion Highlights

Mr. Patrick Puccini (URS) provided a presentation on the overall transportation problems and opportunities process, modelling and forecasting principles, and the details of modelling and forecasting approaches to be used (Greater Golden Horseshoe Model and Strategic Demand Forecasting). Questions were responded to throughout and after the presentation. The following summarizes the key comments/issues raised:

- Concerns expressed about impact of congestion; explained that model and forecasting approach can and will address congestion-related impacts.
- Assurance needed that the model can accommodate the Growth Plan's core principles of sustainable community (live/work balance).
- Concern about the models capability to manage/predict variables; the "what if" scenarios and unknowns (e.g. emerging US position on NAFTA, Ontario may become a "have not" province).
- Assurance needed that community knowledge can be incorporated.
- Questions about how to deal with cross-correlation of parameters.
- Disagree that coefficients are constants. Both variables and coefficients will change.
- The effect of congestion pricing should be built in.
- Questioned whether expert advice on traffic forecasts could suffice without the expenditure on modelling.
- Need comparable survey for buses and trains as well as autos.
- Project team was cautioned not to use the Wilbur Smith report data since data was generated to support a specific conclusion.
- Concern raised that telephone surveys (e.g., Transportation Tomorrow survey) aren't demographically representative (e.g. youth use cellular phones not land lines).
- Concern about the impact of intra-municipal congestion on inter-regional forecasting. Suggest that study should fund communities to do transportation master plans if those plans are not current (e.g. last St. Catharines Master Plan from 1967).
- Some municipalities are not implementing sustainable community plans (e.g. City of Niagara Falls Study was rejected). Municipalities need to implement the Growth Plan.

## Feedback

In addition to the various comments and concerns provided on the approach to the modelling and demand forecasting exercise, participants offered the following input on the presentation style and format of the information session:

- Participants felt that overall, the presentation was excellent.
- Breaks throughout the presentation were appreciated.
- It was suggested that a 'sample' equation and/or complete list of variables also be presented (i.e., for illustrative purpose... to show the level of complexity).
- Suggested that it might be helpful to provide other project examples – where modelling and travel demand forecasting has been used.
- Provide an example of the trip patterns for a specific area (i.e., excerpt from actual trip table).

## Next Meeting

The next full meeting is expected to be held in Spring 2008.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.