

Session: **Public Information Centre #2 Summary**Date: **February 26, 2009**Location: **Rockton World Fairgrounds**Time: **4 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

Introduction

The second of three events for the second round of Public Information Centres (PICs) for the Niagara to GTA Corridor Planning and Environmental Assessment (EA) Study was held on Thursday February 26th, 2009 at the Rockton World Fairgrounds in Rockton. 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 (John Slobodzian, George Ivanoff, Terry Hilditch, Robin Ashdown, Frank Williams, Frank Pravitz and Will Mackenzie), URS Canada Inc. (Paul Hudspith, Patrick Puccini, Tyler Drygas, and Margie Gonzalez), AECOM (Mike Delsey, Paula Neto), MRC (Jack Thompson), Ecoplans (Sandy Nairn) and Lura (Barry Randall) staffed the PIC.

Purpose of the PIC

The purpose of the PIC was to present: the process for predicting and forecasting future transportation conditions; the transportation problems identified through the forecasting exercise and opportunities identified through the Goals and Objectives Discussion Paper; and to obtain feedback on information relating to the problems and opportunities within the NGTA corridor. The PIC also included an opportunity for youth to apply for membership on the project Community Advisory Group (CAG).

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

1. Welcome and Overview
2. Background and Study Process
3. How are future transportation problems predicted
4. What are future transportation problems
5. What are transportation opportunities
6. What's Next
7. First Nations

Attendance and Comments

A total of 84 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 Project Team encouraged visitors to express, in writing, all suggestions, comments or concerns that they had regarding the information presented. Two written comments were received at the PIC. Additional comment sheets are expected (via fax, mail) in the coming weeks.

Summary of What We Heard

The following summarizes the comments received verbally and in writing at the Rockton PIC event:

Verbal Comments

Multi-Modal Approach / Opportunities

- A number of attendees were surprised and supportive of the commitment to consider and assess all modes of transportation (i.e. not just a highway solution)
- The contents of the PIC, the approach to developing a multi-modal Transportation Development Strategy was generally well received by attendees

- Many participants had come to the event expecting to see routes for a new provincial freeway
- Several suggestions regarding routes for a new transportation corridor
- Need to examine opportunities to ship goods across Lake Ontario
- A tunnel across Lake Ontario from Ford Drive to the Red Hill Valley Expressway would provide alternate capacity to the Burlington Skyway
- There are significant opportunities to divert freight from trucks to rail and marine
- Need for improved reliability and flexibility with GO Transit
- Transit, particularly rail-based solutions, should be the top priority
- The QEW should accommodate cars only and service roads should be used as truck-only corridors
- The old rail systems that links Hamilton to Flamborough should be reviewed in terms of providing transit services
- Issues related to population allocations in Guelph may impact demand analysis
- The study area should be expanded to include Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge as this area will grow as an economic hub

Timeframes

- What is the timeframe for Phase 1 of this study?
- How long before MTO has decided what types of transportation improvements to implement?
- When will construction begin?

Methodology

- How will the Greenbelt Plan be considered in examining alternatives?
- Inquiries regarding the process for considering alternatives
- Clarifications regarding study process and the relationship to the previous Mid-Peninsula study
- Need to add local airports to existing conditions inventory

Other Initiatives / Studies / Examples

- What kind of transit does Metrolinx focus on?
- Need for messaging regarding the relationship to other MTO transportation studies
- Inquiries regarding how NGTA relates to Brantford-Cambridge Transportation Corridor Study
- This study needs to consider issues and effects related to peak oil

Written Comments

Multi-Modal Approach / Opportunities

- Integrate NGTA study with the Brantford-Cambridge Study to improve access to the Niagara Frontier
- Inquiries regarding planned inter-regional transit along Highway 6 from Highway 403 to Highway 401
- Would like to see transit systems integrated with all provincial highways

Concerns & Suggestions

- Regardless of multi-modal ambitions, the material presented leads toward the recommended strategy being a Mid-Peninsula highway
- Multi-modal options are not being seriously considered
- Opportunities need to be more detailed
- Construction of highways must consider impacts to drainage and agricultural crop lands

Media

Flamborough Review
Hamilton Spectator