

The Windsor-Essex Parkway - An Overview

In 2005, the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study began under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*. Throughout the study, Windsor and Essex County residents attended meetings, talked to the study team, and provided written comments. This consultation, combined with detailed technical studies and analysis, led to the identification of the Windsor-Essex Parkway as the Ontario access road portion of an end-to-end border transportation system in the Windsor-Detroit Gateway.

The Windsor-Essex Parkway is a once-in-a-generation undertaking. It is unprecedented in its community enhancement features for any highway, anywhere in Ontario and will include:

- 1.8 kilometres of tunnelled sections
- extensive landscaping throughout the corridor
- noise mitigation through strategic placement of tunnels, noise barriers and berms
- ecological restoration and measures to protect wildlife.

Upon completion, the 11 kilometre Parkway will ensure the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services to and from the Windsor-Detroit border, separate local and international traffic, and eliminate stop-and-go traffic in residential areas. With more than 300 acres of green space, 20 kilometres of recreational trails and new community connections, residents in Windsor-Essex will enjoy an improved quality of life.



The Windsor Essex Mobility Group (WEMG) will design, build, finance, and maintain the Parkway. The Parkway is the first road project in Ontario to be delivered using an alternative financing and procurement model.

Design and construction of the Parkway is anticipated to provide a sizeable boost to regional and Ontario economies by creating an estimated 12,000 project-related jobs, with the majority in the Windsor-Essex region.

Work on the Parkway has been underway since Ontario approved the Environmental Assessment in August 2009 and includes:

- acquiring approximately 900 properties
- removing 169 buildings in the corridor
- partnering with local groups for community benefit, including salvaging more than 250 tonnes of materials
- ecological restoration
- constructing two bridges and a two kilometre noise barrier
- relocating utilities and raising two hydro towers.

Construction is scheduled to begin in late summer 2011 and the Parkway is expected to be open to traffic in fall 2014.

The public has an important role to play during the design and construction phases of the Parkway. Community input will be solicited at Public Information Open Houses and at other consultation events over 2011 and 2012 and questions, feedback and comments are always welcome. The public can reach the project team through email at detroit.river@ontario.ca or by mail at 949 McDougall Avenue, Suite 200, Windsor, ON, N9A 1L9 (Fax: 519-973-7327). The Windsor Essex Mobility Group's Windsor office will open soon.

For project information, to join the mailing list and to submit resumes and company information visit www.weparkway.ca. Follow the project on Twitter (www.twitter.com/weparkway), Flickr (www.flickr.com/weparkway) and YouTube (www.youtube.com/weparkway) to stay in touch and to find out the latest news.

Landscape and Trail Master Plan

During the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study, the community was consulted on what they wanted to see included in the Windsor-Essex Parkway's green space. Input received helped shape the *Urban Design and Landscape Plan* developed during the Environmental Assessment process.

The Windsor-Essex Parkway provides more than 300 acres (120 hectares) of green space with landscaped areas, ecological protection and restoration areas, and 20 kilometres of multi-use trails. These general landscape components are now being further defined through the Windsor Essex Mobility Group's *Landscape and Trail Master Plan*. This plan will detail what features such as trails, lighting, seating, public art and key gateway locations will look like and how they will be used.



Themes

A "Carolinian" theme, which received public support during the DRIC study, will be carried through as the primary theme for the green space. This theme reflects ecological sensitivity with a contemporary approach. It supports protection and expansion of adjacent natural areas with a focus on Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savannah.

Key Features

- The landscape and aesthetic features will be developed from the perspective of Parkway's drivers, pedestrians and adjacent residents.
- Three gateway areas are proposed for the Parkway that reflect the natural and cultural history of the area.
- The restored and reconnected ecological landscapes may include a range of prairie, wetland and woodland habitats.
- The lit, paved, four-metre wide primary multi-use trail system will allow pedestrians and cyclists to travel the length of the Parkway without encountering a vehicle and will bring communities together.
- Places for resting, meeting, reflection, and nature observation may be provided along the trail system and on the tunnel tops.
- Signage on the trail system will not only provide direction but may also explain the ecological restoration processes and promote appreciation of the natural and cultural history of the area.

Community Input

Your input to the *Landscape and Trail Master Plan* is important. Residents are encouraged to participate in upcoming workshops that will present the approach to landscape design in the corridor with the following discussion topics:

- landscape treatment of gateways and tunnel tops
- public art opportunities
- trail system (including lighting, bridges, connections and amenities)
- appearance of noise barriers, walls and screening landscapes
- vegetation preservation and habitat enhancement measures
- opportunities for community involvement and partnerships.

Contacts:

Ministry of Transportation

Windsor Border Initiatives
Implementation Group Office
949 McDougall Avenue, Suite 200
Windsor, ON N9A 1L9
Tel: 519-973-7367
Fax: 519-973-7327
detroit.river@ontario.ca

Windsor Essex Mobility Group

Public Liaison Officer
Tel: 226-252-0156
wep-plo@lura.ca

The Windsor Essex Mobility Group

The Windsor Essex Mobility Group (WEMG) will design, build, finance, and maintain the Windsor-Essex Parkway – the first road project in Ontario to be delivered using an alternative financing and procurement model. WEMG partners include ACS Infrastructure Canada Inc., Acciona Concessions Canada, and Fluor Canada Limited.



The design and construction of the project will be performed under contract with Parkway Infrastructure Constructors (PIC), a joint venture of Fluor Canada, Ltd., Dragados Canada Inc. and Acciona Infrastructures Canada Inc. PIC already has agreements in place with Ontario-based companies, including Amico Infrastructures Inc., Black & McDonald, Hatch Mott MacDonald, Dillon Consulting Ltd., LEA Consulting Ltd., and AMEC. Each company is responsible for putting together its team for the project. In addition to partnering with local businesses, WEMG has an agreement in place with Labourer's Union Local 625.



A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the University of Windsor to support a grant study on the effect of this project on the local community. PIC will work with the University and St. Clair College to find additional ways to involve them in the project. Discussions and ongoing consultation with local First Nations will continue to determine how to utilize and involve them in the project.



The project team foresees hiring individuals in the following functions:

- engineering
- accounting
- quality control
- safety
- project control
- finance.

These positions will be available at different times throughout the project, based on the requirements of the job. Many will be required this summer. The project team is also accepting information from individual companies who may have products, techniques and approaches or experience that will contribute to the Parkway design, construction or operation. Local businesses have a key role to play in this project and communicating with the team about what they can offer is an important first step.

To submit a résumé or company profile information please visit www.weparkway.ca/employment.html.

Contacts:

Ministry of Transportation

Windsor Border Initiatives
Implementation Group Office
949 McDougall Avenue, Suite 200
Windsor, ON N9A 1L9
Tel: 519-973-7367
Fax: 519-973-7327
detroit.river@ontario.ca

Windsor Essex Mobility Group

Public Liaison Officer
Tel: 226-252-0156
wep-plo@lura.ca