

Meeting: **Joint Regulatory Agencies Advisory Group (RAAG)
Niagara to GTA Corridor and GTA West Corridor
Planning and Environmental Assessment Studies**

Location: Holiday Inn Burlington, Burlington NC Room
3063 South Service Road, Burlington

Purpose: Process Framework for Developing & Assessing Transportation Alternatives Date: Friday June 19, 2009

Chair: Glenn Pothier (GLPi) (facilitator) Time: 1:30 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Present: **NGTA and GTA West Project Team**

John Slobodzian, MTO	Sandy Nairn, Ecoplans
Terry Hilditch, MTO	Mike Delsey, AECOM
Heide Garbot, MTO	Karin Wall, AECOM
Frank Pravitz, MTO	Patrick Puccini, URS
Steve Baczyk, MTO	Glenn Pothier, GLPi (facilitator)

RAAG Representatives

Randy Marsh	CPR
Jennifer Lawrence	Conservation Halton
Kathryn Pounder	NEC
Carlene Whittingham	MMAH
Marc Magierowicz	MMAH
Steven Strong	MNR, Aurora
Solange Desautels	MOE
Barb Slattery	MOE
Les Koch	Hydro One
Steve Woolfenden	CEAA
Dave Gibson	DFO
Drew Crinklaw	OMAFRA
Jamie Ferguson	Grand River Conservation Authority
Karla Barboza	Ministry of Culture
Dave Marriott	MNR
Denise Fell	Environment Canada
Beth Williston	TRCA

<u>Items</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	<p data-bbox="418 289 646 319"><u>Opening Remarks</u></p> <p data-bbox="418 346 1468 407">G. Pothier (GLPi), independent facilitator, provided a session overview and thanked the attendees for coming to the meeting.</p>
2 & 3	<p data-bbox="418 436 1468 497"><u>NGTA and GTA West Study Updates and Transportation Problems and Opportunities Reports</u></p> <p data-bbox="418 525 1468 642">M. Delsey provided a brief overview of the status of the NGTA and GTA West studies. He described the study areas for both studies, the study process that both studies are following, as well as a summary of recent events, including the second round of Public Information Centres.</p> <p data-bbox="418 672 1468 758">He also noted that the Transportation Problems and Opportunities Report for both studies is in the process of being finalized and will be available for stakeholder review later this summer.</p>
4	<p data-bbox="418 787 1414 816"><u>Process Framework for Developing and Assessing Transportation Alternatives</u></p> <p data-bbox="418 846 1468 907">S. Nairn presented the process framework that has been developed by the Project Team to guide the development and assessment of the transportation alternatives.</p> <p data-bbox="418 936 1468 997">He also discussed the environmental and transportation criteria that the Project Team has developed for assessing the alternatives at a broad level.</p> <p data-bbox="418 1026 1468 1087">The presentation handout package containing this information has been appended to these minutes for ease of reference.</p> <p data-bbox="418 1117 1365 1146">The following summarizes the items discussed during and after the presentation:</p> <ul data-bbox="467 1171 1468 1902" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="467 1171 1468 1289"> <p data-bbox="467 1171 1468 1232">• Question: Will the Transportation Problems and Opportunities Report for both studies be available for review?</p> <p data-bbox="516 1257 699 1287"><i>Response: Yes.</i></p> <li data-bbox="467 1314 1468 1465"> <p data-bbox="467 1314 1468 1375">• Comment: The alternatives for the NGTA and GTA West studies should be considered in a coordinated fashion.</p> <p data-bbox="516 1400 1468 1461"><i>Response: Agreed. The studies are closely coordinated, and will continue to be throughout the "Alternatives" phase of the project.</i></p> <li data-bbox="467 1491 1468 1671"> <p data-bbox="467 1491 1468 1577">• Question: In developing the transportation alternatives, will improvements in a north-south orientation be considered as well as improvements in an east-west orientation?</p> <p data-bbox="516 1602 1468 1663"><i>Response: Yes, we will be considering alternatives in both the north-south and east-west orientation for both studies.</i></p> <li data-bbox="467 1696 1468 1902"> <p data-bbox="467 1696 1468 1814">• Question: In favour of the building block approach that has been developed for generating the transportation alternatives. Does this mean that in the scenario that Combination #2 addressed all of the transportation problems and opportunities the Project Team would not proceed to Combination #3?</p> <p data-bbox="516 1839 1468 1900"><i>Response: Yes, if it was found that the improvements corresponding to a Combination alternative (in this case Combo #2) could fully address the</i></p>

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transportation problems and opportunities, the Project Team would not proceed to Combination #3.

- Question: Will the RAAG agencies be given the opportunity to review the process of generating the transportation alternatives?

Response: Yes, the process will be presented at the third round of Public Information Centres, and will be fully documented in the Area Transportation System Alternatives Report at the end of this phase of both studies.

- Comment: The Project Team should base the assessment of land use impacts on approved Official Plans.

Response: Agreed, however, the Project Team will also consider potential impacts based on proposed Official Plans.

- Question: How will impacts to First Nations be assessed? Will they be consulting with First Nations on this assessment?

Response: The Project Team has been consulting with First Nations throughout the study, and will continue to seek their feedback as the project moves forward into the generation and assessment of transportation alternatives.

- Question: Will the transportation alternatives be further refined as the assessment process proceeds?

Response: Yes. If in going through the assessment of the transportation alternatives, it becomes apparent that certain refinements to some of the alternatives would result in a better set of alternatives, these refinements will be incorporated and assessed accordingly.

- Comment: Concerned that key decisions will be made based on the high level assessment that the Project Team will be conducting before the next round of consultation, and that these decisions may be affected by issues that don't emerge until the alternatives are assessed at a more detailed level.

Response: This is a common concern on large scale Individual EAs. The Ministry's position is that if a critical issue emerges during later stages that wasn't apparent during earlier stages, it is incumbent on the proponent to determine the significance of the issue and update the recommendations as appropriate.

It should be noted that there will be a more detailed assessment of the transportation alternatives subsequent to PIC #3 based on more specific environmental and transportation criteria, which will be presented to the RAAG agencies at a future meeting.

In addition, following this phase of the EA study, route planning will be undertaken for any recommendations that fall within the jurisdiction of the Ministry. A detailed assessment of the route alternatives would also be undertaken at that stage.

- Comment: Many of the environmental criteria that have been presented focus on impacts to specific types of environmental features rather than focusing on environmental systems. It would be more appropriate to use a systems based approach.

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Response: Agreed. We are seeking the RAAG agencies assistance in identifying the most appropriate process for assessing the broad level transportation alternatives. Assistance in identifying the types of systems impacts that should be considered would be very beneficial to the Project Team.

- Comment: The Project Team should consider a sensitivity and function based approach in assessing the transportation alternatives. As an example, differentiate between edge impacts and core impacts for woodlots.

Response: Agreed. Assistance in identifying criteria where this type of approach should be utilized would be very beneficial to the Project Team.

- Comment: The Project Team should remain cognizant of the provincial priorities embodied in each of the relevant approved provincial policies as they undertake the assessment of the transportation alternatives.

Response: Agreed.

- Question: How will the effect of the transportation alternatives on Greenhouse Gases be assessed? Would it be a regional assessment, or would it be possible to differentiate between the affects of alternatives in certain areas.

Response: This issue has been discussed with the air quality experts on the Project Team. While we will attempt to be as specific as possible, the level of detail that can be achieved will depend on some extent on the nature of the alternatives.

- Comment: Consideration should be given to the potential impacts of the transportation alternatives during the construction phase, e.g. noise impacts.

Response: Comment noted. This issue will be further considered by the Project Team.

5 Next Steps and Open Forum

It was agreed that the material presented at this meeting would be distributed to all members of the RAAG (including those unable to attend) with these meeting minutes.

The meeting attendees agreed to provide further comments and advice to the Project Team with respect to the assessment of the transportation alternatives subsequent to the meeting within a four week timeframe.

6 Closing Remarks

J. Slobodzian provided closing remarks and noted that the Project Team greatly appreciates all of the feedback that has been provided by RAAG agencies for both the NGTA and GTA West studies to date and looks forward to their assistance in identifying the criteria to be assessed as well as the findings of the assessment of the transportation alternatives.

He also noted that he has taken another position within the Ministry and will no longer be the Project Coordinator for the NGTA Study. He thanked attendees for their support on both projects and noted that Roger Ward will be assuming the role of Project Coordinator in mid-July.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.