

2. PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROGRAM

As required by the Municipal Class EA process, this project involved the following mandatory points of public contact, as well as extensive outreach with involved agencies, stakeholder groups and individuals. Consultation materials (notices, updates, summary report) are included in **Technical Appendix Volume 2** provided under separate cover.

2.1 Mandatory Public Contacts

2.1.1 NOTICE OF STUDY COMMENCEMENT AND PIC #1

Notice of Study Commencement and invitation to Public Information Centre (PIC) #1 was issued on May 4, 2005 and mailed to agencies, stakeholder groups and individuals included on the initial Project Mailing List. It was also posted in the Windsor Star, covered by other local media outlets and placed on the project web site at www.WindsorEAs.ca (see **Technical Appendix Volume 2** under separate cover).

Public Information Centre #1 was held on May 10, 2005 at the Cleary International Centre with 76 people signing in. A number of displays were set up dealing with the study scope, transportation conditions and alternative actions, and urban design possibilities along Riverside Drive. An information sheet on the project was distributed, as well as a comment sheet with 48 being returned with comments. The PIC summary report (see **Technical Appendix Volume 2** under separate cover) includes the following public input:

EXHIBIT 2.1 – PUBLIC RESPONSE TO TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES AT PIC #1

Alternatives noted on the comment form Total number who responded to this question: 41	# of people who think that this alternative is reasonable for further consideration
Do Nothing – make no changes	0
Resurface the road and install new curbs and sidewalks only	14
Widen 2 lane sections to 4 lanes	4
Install centre turn lane	5
Traffic diversion to other routes	19
Add bike lanes on the Road	20
Add off-road bike paths where possible	23
Make strategic localized improvements (i.e. signage curbs)	13
Install traffic calming devices (i.e. chicanes, raised intersections, textured crosswalks, traffic circles (modern roundabouts, bump-outs, rumble strips)	22

EXHIBIT 2.2 – PUBLIC RESPONSE TO LANDSCAPE / URBAN DESIGN ALTERNATIVES AT PIC #1

Alternatives noted on the comment form Total number who responded to this question: 35	# of people who think that this alternative is reasonable for further consideration
More street vegetation	19
Different street lighting	7
More street furniture (i.e. benches, planters)	10
Distinctive surfaces treatments on sections of the Road and sidewalks	12
Pedestrian safety features	21
Public art on public lands	14

2.1.2 PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE #2

Public Information Centre #2 was held on December 7, 2005 at the Cleary International Centre with 110 people signing in. The notice was issued on November 26th, placed in the Windsor Star and covered by other local media outlets, the project web site, by mail-outs to all on the project mailing list and with placement of roadside signs at locations along Riverside Drive (see example to the right). An information sheet on the study progress and comment sheet were distributed at the PIC. Exhibits were displayed on the transportation problems confirmed on Riverside Drive, alternative transportation and streetscape improvement solutions, evaluation considerations and an update on the project schedule.



By January 2006, 62 comment sheets had been completed and returned, and are included in **Technical Appendix Volume 2** under separate cover. Examples of some positive public comments provided on the comment sheet include:

- *You're on the right track. Please follow through with these ideas;*
- *Riverside Drive is designated as a Scenic Parkway yet its current use is primarily commuter traffic;*
- *Calming devices are an excellent idea. Put in the traffic calming measures and there should be no need for more lights;*
- *Eliminate parking on Wyandotte during peak hours;*
- *No sidewalks on the north side.*

- *Please please please get bike lanes for the full lengths of Riverside Drive;*
- *Bicycles should only be viewed as Sunday driver status given our weather;*
- *Courts need to impose loss of points for speeding;*
- *Let's slow things down; and*
- *Keep it scenic, keep it parkway, keep it friendly.*

The comment sheet issued at PIC #2 and on the project web site also included an opportunity for the public to respond to the types of improvement alternatives being considered for Riverside Drive. Exhibit 2.3 is a tally of these more specific responses, indicating general support by the respondents for traffic diversion to Wyandotte Street, use of traffic calming, improved traffic operations and more off-road multi-use trails. A more neutral position was recorded on the installation of bike lanes on Riverside Drive.

EXHIBIT 2.3 – PUBLIC RESPONSE TO PIC #2 COMMENTS SHEET QUESTIONS

Riverside Drive Vista Improvement Project	Public Information Centre #2 - Summary of Comment Sheets		
Do Nothing	yes:3	no: 37	not
sure: 1			
Problem 1: Riverside Drive Capacity			
1.1 On two lane sections, should lanes be added to serve more traffic	yes: 3	no: 52	maybe: 1
1.2 On four lane section in downtown being reduced to two lanes for features	yes: 21	no: 28	don't know: 3
Problem 2: Growing Traffic Volume on Riverside Drive Divert some traffic to other routes by:			
2.1 Improving traffic operations and capacity on Wyandotte St. E,	yes: 50	no: 0	
2.2 Installing traffic calming measures on Riverside Dr.E.	yes: 45	no: 4	don't know: 1
2.3 Installing traffic diverters on parts of Riverside Drive East to redirect traffic away	yes: 32	no: 10	
2.4 Closing parts of Riverside Drive East with barriers to traffic	yes: 19	no: 25	
Problem 3: Excessive Speeds			
Which of the following traffic calming measures would you support?			
3.1 Raised Crosswalks	yes: 24	no: 4	
3.2 Raised Intersections	yes: 29	no: 2	
3.3 Textured Crosswalks	yes: 24	no: 1	
3.5 Modern Roundabouts	yes: 12	no: 7	
3.6 Raised Median Islands	yes: 20	no: 5	
3.7 Curb Extensions	yes: 23	no: 7	
3.8 Reduced Curb Radius	yes: 7	no: 7	
Problem 4: Poor Traffic Conditions			
4.1 improve traffic operations at key signalized intersections by adjusting signal timing and/or advanced left turn lanes	yes: 29	no: 14	not sure: 2
4.2 see detailed comments			
4.3 Extend Riverside Drive bikeways with:			
a) exclusive bike lanes on both sides of the Drive	yes: 13	no: 17	
b) wide shared on-road bike routes from-to	yes: 6	no: 16	
c) off-road multi-use trail from-to	yes: 22	no: 4	
4.4 Improve pedestrian safety by adding and improving sidewalks along Riverside Drive:			
a) west of Ouellette Avenue on north side:	yes: 21	no: 9	
b) east of Walker Road on entire north and south side:	yes: 19	no: 17	
c) east of Walker Road except where there is abutting residential property	yes: 28	no: 5	

2.1.1 PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE #3

Public Information Centre #3 was held at the Cleary International Centre on May 24, 2006, with the notice issued on May 10th and advertised in the Windsor Star and covered by other local media outlets, as well as on the project web site, by mail-outs to all on the project mailing list and with placement of roadside signs at locations along Riverside Drive. The purpose of the open house and presentation was to present the Riverside Drive improvement program preferred by the project Steering Committee and Technical Committee and solicit public response. A Question & Answer sheet was distributed to attendees of the session, with 149 people signed in. The comment sheet resulted in 185 responses received up to and beyond the requested deadline, asking respondents for their level of support for the main improvement program elements (see Section 7) summarized as follows with PIC #3 materials included in **Technical Appendix 2** under separate cover:

EXHIBIT 2.4 – PUBLIC RESPONSE SUMMARY TO PIC #3 COMMENT SHEET QUESTIONS

On the controversial question about whether bike lanes should be added to Riverside Drive as part of the VIP Program improvements, the response was slanted towards the negative by the responding residents of the Drive and towards the positive by other respondents not residing on the Drive, resulting in a neutral public response to this question as shown by the percentages responses:

ON THE QUESTION OF EXTENDING ON-ROAD BIKE LANES ON RIVERSIDE DRIVE:

Riverside Drive Residents (78):	Non-Riverside Drive Residents (102):	All Respondents (180)
Disagree - 69%	Disagree - 33%	Disagree - 49.0%
Neutral - 4%	Neutral - 3%	Neutral - 3.3%
Support - 27%	Support - 64%	Support - 47.7 %
Total - 100%	Total - 100%	Total - 100%

2.2 Public and Agency Outreach

In addition to the mandatory public contacts summarized above and recorded in **Technical Appendix Volume 2** under separate cover, the following additional contacts were made during the period from project commencement in February 2005 to the preparation of the draft ESR document in August 2006 and this final ESR document in December 2006. These outreach meetings involved public and agency groups regarding specific issues involving the Riverside Drive VIP EA:

1. April 26, 2005 meeting was held at the Riverside Sportsman Club with residents of Riverside Drive between Lauzon Road and municipal address 8838 Riverside Drive to discuss roadway-related safety problems and associated property damage along the section of the Drive. Residents were invited to attend via mailed invitations, and minutes of the meeting are included in **Technical Appendix 2** under separate cover.

2. April 27, 2005 meeting was held at the Riverside Public Library with residents of Riverside Drive between Patrice Street and St. Rose Avenue invited by mail regarding the replacement of the watermain under Riverside Drive, and to clarify that this Windsor Utilities project was not part of the Riverside Drive VIP EA. Minutes of the meeting are included in Technical Appendix 2 under separate cover.
3. December 8, 2005 meeting with officials of Casino Windsor regarding alternative traffic operation changes on Riverside Drive in the vicinity of the casino.
4. December 13, 2005 meeting with representatives of Windsor Fire and Rescue, Windsor Essex EMS and Windsor Police Services regarding traffic calming alternative on Riverside Drive.
5. December 13, 2005 meeting with the Windsor Bicycle Committee regarding cycling alternatives for Riverside Drive.
6. February 20, 2006 meeting with representatives of the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee to discuss the project status.
7. March 16, 2006 meeting with the City's Heritage and Cultural Development Advisor to discuss opportunities for including public art in the pedestrian crossing nodes being considered for Riverside Drive.
8. May 24, 2006 meeting with the Central Riverfront Technical Advisory Committee to discuss the project status and inclusion of a pedestrian promenade within the Riverside Drive Improvement Program.


Additional outreach was conducted with a variety of agencies, including the Windsor Heritage Committee, Windsor Accessibility Advisory Committee and Windsor Essex County Active Living Coalition, plus stakeholders and individual members of the public primarily via letters and e-mails, and in some cases site visits, that are all recorded in the project files. Official responses made by the Project Team and stakeholders are included in Technical Appendix **Volume 2** under separate cover.

2.3 Notice of Study Completion and Public Review Period

The three Public Information Centres and associated outreach meetings held during the preparation of the Riverside Drive VIP EA more than satisfy the mandatory public contact requirements of the Municipal Class EA process. After the May 24th PIC #3, the project team began preparation of the Draft ESR documenting the findings, conclusions and preferred recommendations of the study. At its regular meeting on September 5, 2006, City Council then received the Draft ESR, and passed a resolution (CR417/2006) directing staff to advertise a Notice advising the public that the Draft ESR would be available for public review and comment during the 90-day period extending from September 11 to December 11, 2006.

The purpose of this review period was to solicit public input into the completion of the ESR document, and also attempt to resolve a number of outstanding objections and misunderstandings held by some members of the public, and more specifically some Riverside Drive residents, about the preferred improvement program for the Drive. Notice of this review period was communicated in three primary ways:

- A notice of the public review period and registering of public comments was mailed to all contacts on the lengthy project mailing list;

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- This notice and the Draft ESR document were posted on the City's project web site following the September 5th Council resolution; and
 - The notice was advertised in the Windsor star on September 13 and 16, 2006.

In each of these communications, the public was informed that the Draft ESR would be available for viewing during the 90 day period as follows:

- On the City's project web site;
- At five (5) public venues, namely Windsor's Main Public Library and the Riverside Branch Library, the Public Works Department, the City Clerks Office and at the local Stantec Consulting office; and
- A CD of the Draft ESR document was made available for purchase from the Public Works Department.

Copies of the advertisements and mailouts prepared for the public review period are included in **Technical Appendix Volume 2**.

Based on the City-wide importance of the Riverside Drive VIP, and the early response to the public review period by polarized resident and stakeholder groups, centred mainly on issues associated with the on-road bicycle lane and traffic calming elements of the preferred improvement program, the Project Team made arrangements for the following three additional public outreach events during this public review period.

2.3.1 OCTOBER 24TH RESIDENTS MEETING

Opposition from some Riverside Drive residents to possible changes to the Drive was recorded early in the EA process. This opposition was focused primarily on the possible extension of on-road bicycle lanes along the residential section of Riverside Drive east of Strabane Avenue as part of a possible improvement program. This opposition extends back to similar opposition during the previous attempt to approve a Riverside Drive improvement EA in the mid-1990's.

The current opposition began organizing during the summer of 2006 against extended bicycle lanes on Riverside Drive, and by late September, 2006 formed an organization called "Save Our Scenic Drive". The basic position of this resident organization is that the recommended Riverside Drive Improvement Program preferred in this EA, and specifically the extension of on-road bike lanes, will encourage higher vehicle traffic speed and volume on the Drive. To date this position has not been substantiated by either the organization or any professional evidence.

The group has advocated that the City put more effort into reduced speed limit enforcement, more effective traffic calming measures and more emphasis on diverting Riverside Drive traffic to alternative routes, specifically Wyandotte Street East. This position was advocated at a Residents Public Meeting organized by the "Save Our Scenic Drive" group and Councillor Gignac on October 24, 2006.

The October 24th meeting was attended by 201 residents who signed in, plus Councillor Gignac and consulting team and Technical Committee representatives who attended to answer questions and clarify any points of fact about the Draft ESR and preferred Riverside Drive Improvement Program. The meeting proved effective in making these clarification, and showing that all sides, especially anti-bicycle route and bicycle advocates, all had four similar objectives:

- Reduce traffic speed on Riverside Drive;
- Reduce traffic volume on Riverside Drive;
- Provide safe passage for all users of Riverside Drive; and;
- Improve Riverside Drive to look like Windsor's premier Scenic Drive.

The meeting provided an opportunity to clarify and correct a number of misunderstandings and statements made by the "Save Our Scenic Drive" in a newsletter they circulated in late September opposing the improvement program. Resident input gained from this meeting resulted in a number of enhancements being made to the traffic calming component of the program for the residential section of Riverside Drive between Strabane Avenue and Lauzon Road. This was done while still maintaining Riverside Drive as a continuous public road and Scenic Drive along the Windsor waterfront, providing access to public parkland, residential properties and commercial establishments.

2.3.2 OCTOBER / NOVEMBER SHOPPING MALL DISPLAYS

Information on the preferred improvement program for Riverside Drive was displayed at the Devonshire Mall on Saturday, October 26 and the Tecumseh Mall on Saturday, November 4, 2006. Two members of the Project Team were in attendance at each display from noon until 4:00 p.m., and public input was very informal. At the Devonshire Mall display, it is estimated that the Project Team members spoke with approximately 50 people who showed interest in the project and provided questions or comments. Similarly, brief discussions were held with about 30 people at the Tecumseh Mall, with the vast majority of comments supporting the improvement program.

Comment forms were available at each display, but owing to the informal format, only 10 forms were completed. Both displays were also reported by the Windsor Star.

2.3.3 FINAL NOTICE OF STUDY COMPLETION AND MANDATORY PUBLIC REVIEW

The final steps in completing this EA study will be to have Windsor City Council table this ESR and authorize that a Notice of Study Completion be advertised with a minimum 30 day public review period. This will allow final comments and questions to be made by the public and addressed by the Project Team. The public will also be provided the opportunity to request a Part II Order should any concerns remain unresolved. If one or more Part II Order requests are made, the Minister of the Environment will make the final decision, and if approved, the ESR will be filed, completing the EA process Windsor City Council will then make the final decision to implement the improvement program for Riverside Drive.

The public will be informed of the Notice of Study Completion by mailout to those on the project mailing list, by a notice on the project web site and through advertisements in the Windsor Star.

