

Comments	MTO Response
<p>Segment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It does not make sense to go north if where you're trying to get to is the south. It makes more sense to go on the south side of the tracks to get to the south side of Stratford. Then you're not upsetting the growth of a town as great as Shakespeare and allow it, as a small town to grow. 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am against the south bypass and the north bypass. Improve the existing highway by putting in passing lanes where the land was expropriated years ago. Through Shakespeare, there could possibly be a turning lane. All the money on this study could have been spent on improved railway transportation. Goods could be shipped by freight train instead of trucks. 	<p>Your opposition to the north and south bypasses of Shakespeare is noted. Passing lanes east and west of Shakespeare and the provision of a centre left turn lane through Shakespeare do not address several of the problems the study set out to address, specifically transportation capacity and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare. Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p> <p>Railways are best suited for carrying bulk commodities over long distances between major freight terminals. For short-distance hauls of non-bulk freight commodities by rail, it takes longer to load and unload than it does to ship them, rendering this unattractive to shippers, carriers and receivers from the perspectives of cost and timeliness, particularly for perishable products such as fresh vegetables and fruit.</p> <p>Based upon the 2000 Commercial Vehicle Survey, approximately 63% of the truck demands in the Highway 7&8 corridor are for short to medium distance trips, and not suitable for diversion to freight rail service. The long distance freight market currently served by trucks in the Highway 7&8 corridor is estimated at 560 vehicles per day. Even if all of the long distance freight could be shifted from truck to rail, this would not remove enough traffic from the Highway 7&8 corridor to address the forecasted 2031 capacity deficiencies between and through Stratford, Shakespeare and New Hamburg, and beyond.</p> <p>Considering the above, freight rail service was not carried forward. However, the 2031 forecasts do account for a 20% shift of long distance freight from truck to rail which reduces the 2031 truck volumes in the corridor by approximately 100 trucks per day.</p>
<p>Segment E, Alternative E2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I prefer this design over all the others because it has the least amount of environmental impact. It has the least amount of impact to human lives and agricultural activities and it provides the best overall traffic flow conditions to meet the current and future needs of this area of southern Ontario. 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North bypass with existing 7&8: suggest that roundabouts be used to provide access to Shakespeare and the north-south crossings are signalised. 	<p>Your preference for a north bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>Segment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture impact is less on the south route. The south bypass will hug the train tracks and result in least severance of farm lands. The north bypass severs many farms and displaces a number of buildings, homes and businesses. The north bypass will also destroy a conservation area on my property. My livelihood is in jeopardy with the north route and the impacts on business are less on the south route. The south route will also let tourists access Shakespeare while the north route will not. Traffic coming from Tavistock will be forced through Shakespeare which is not necessary on the south route. The south route will also provide better access to residents of the area. 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>Previous documentation associated with the assessment and evaluation of the Shakespeare Area alternatives can be found in Report H available on the study website www.7and8corridorstudy.ca.</p>
<p>Segment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agricultural impact is less on the south bypass than the north. The south bypass hugs the tracks and results in less severance of farmland. The north bypass severs multiple farms and displaces a number of homes and buildings. The north bypass destroys a conservation area on lots 16 and 17. The business impact is less for the south route than the north. The south allows incoming tourist traffic from Waterloo to access Shakespeare while the north bypass will eliminate this access. Local traffic will be affected less by the south bypass with all traffic from Tavistock being pushed through Shakespeare with the north bypass. This will create more traffic on Road 107 and will be an inconvenience for travellers to have to go so far north. The south 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>Previous documentation associated with the assessment and evaluation of the Shakespeare Area alternatives can be found in Report H available on the study website www.7and8corridorstudy.ca.</p>

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<p>bypass will create a smoother, quicker access for area residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stratford to New Hamburg on 7&8 • Stratford to Shakespeare on Line 33 • After consistent travel during 6:30 am rush hour traffic, I find it disturbing that this is even being considered. Many times I drive this route with very minimal to no traffic at all. • On my return trip during rush hour (4 to 6:30 pm), I find traffic has picked up somewhat but not enough to justify spending the money you would be forking out to do this. 	<p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as passing lanes east and west of Shakespeare, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p>
<p>North Bypass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think the north bypass makes more sense than a 4 lane route taking out acres and acres of farmland. Also, it seems to me that you people are roundabout obsessed, stop signs make more sense to me. 	<p>Your preference for a north bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>Segment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a [REDACTED] and demand two entrances – 1 in and 1 out (this is a must)! 	<p>Your request for two access points to your business has been noted. Access management requirements for the corridor will be developed following the selection of the preferred preliminary design alternative and will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>Segment G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I prefer alternative G2 but: • If the decision is to go with G1, we strongly suggest that a right turn lane be added for eastbound traffic approaching Haysville as the present situation is very dangerous with eastbound traffic coming down a significant slope. • The G2 alternative is the most 'senior friendly' for those walking and cycling in the area. 	<p>Your preference for Alternative G2, which includes 4-lanes with a 7 metre median and interchanges at Pell Street and Hamilton Street, has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>North</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The north bypass makes more sense if you have to have a bypass as less people are impacted. However, staying on 7&8 and going through Shakespeare is a better option. • Upgrade the existing road, don't waste land and money and make use of what you have. 	<p>Your preference for a north bypass of Shakespeare or use of existing Highway 7&8 through Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North route around Shakespeare • There absolutely must be access to the village from both the east and west ends of the Shakespeare, in both directions. Shakespeare businesses derive their clientele from the 'drive-by' traffic. • Suggest that at the east end, access to the village be provided at the bottom of the hill (lot 4) and the curve be more gradual than is shown right now. • The road should stay north of the hill (round the tower) and follow north of the natural ridge to Road 107. The ridge will act as a natural noise barrier for the village. The land is also flatter on the north side of the ridge. 	<p>Your comments regarding the alignment of the north bypass alternative in the Shakespeare area and the associated access to the village have been noted.</p> <p>Thank you for the invitation to visit your property and discuss the alignment refinements you've suggestion. We will contact you in the Spring to arrange a site visit.</p>
<p>East of Road 102</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and safety is of great concern. • The proximity of the road to our house is already too close. 	<p>We do appreciate your concerns regarding access and safety given the proximity of your home to the widened highway corridor. Further to our letter of October 1, 2012, we had hoped to arrange a site visit to your property earlier this fall. We apologize for the delay arranging this. We will contact you early in the new year to arrange this meeting to discuss the preliminary design alternatives under consideration in the vicinity of your property and your concerns in greater detail.</p>
<p>Segment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern bypass of Shakespeare is preferable to northern bypass for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Twinning / paralleling the tracks does not further dissect farms where the northern bypass would - Southern bypass of Shakespeare does not inhibit or affect growth of the village and there is the ability to expand the village to the north (there is a white plan of subdivision registered on the north west farm, on the village boundary) 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The northern bypass affects future expansion and servicing (sewer / water) as as the future need for noise barriers that the village would need before the highway expansion as the village expansion will occur, based on population growth, sooner than highway expansion which has no determined timing. - The south bypass better serves truck and service traffic to Stratford and commuters with no interest in Shakespeare or Stratford. - A better flow of traffic would occur on the south bypass as the north bypass forces all commuters, with no interest in stopping, through the Town. - The south bypass is also preferable as it twins the tracks and the reality of our country is that so many rail lines have been abandoned and turned into walking trails, the existing rail line could well be available for expansion. - Conversely, if rail traffic increased and highway use decreased, a rail line embedded in the highway, much like the electric tram lines in Toronto are used for streetcar traffic, could see common use of snow plows, pavement maintenance, etc. • On a personal note, I have many times been forced through Toronto with no intention of stopping, on my way to Kingston, Ottawa and the east coast. Driving through the city is never preferable for the same reasons the north bypass is negative. Further, when commuting to Clifton and Goderich, I use Pork Street or Vivian Street unless I have a reason to stop in Stratford. 	<p>review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I like the concept of roundabouts rather than lights at intersections. • However, I think they will need to be made bigger for transport trucks and farm wagons so they do not of from right lane to left lane and both lanes, or simply straight over the centre of the circle. 	<p>Your preference for roundabouts rather than signalized intersections has been noted. The roundabout design will accommodate larger trucks and farm equipment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely unnecessary. • Will not benefit residents of Perth County at all. • City of Stratford being unrealistic to think that a four lane highway will bring business or tourists to the City – would not encourage commuting. • There are already right of ways to use, e.g. the railway, the hydro lines • Ridiculous to block off roads that the agricultural community uses just to benefit people passing through. • Expense of land expropriation, building bridges etc is not justified, no profit for anyone. • No consideration for people who make their livelihood in Perth East • Should not restrict access to any business • Should not take away usable farm land • Should not increase difficulty of getting to suppliers, elevators, etc • If existing roads were improved (widened), traffic on 7&8 would be reduced as people would take the alternative roads either to the north or the south and 7&8 would be a wilderness except during summer festival show endings. These people would stay and eat and boost the economy not race to Kitchener-Waterloo. 	<p>Your concerns and suggestions regarding the preliminary design alternatives being considered have been noted.</p> <p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>During the ‘Transportation Planning’ phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as paving Perth Line 33 and Vivian Street, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward as they will have environmental impacts without providing the required transportation benefits.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p> <p>For the most part, the crossing road treatments under considerations will maintain the connectivity of the road network.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General: Dividing farmers land, province constructs overpasses so that the farmers can get equipment to the other side of their land safely. Province pays for construction and maintenance of infrastructure, farmers take care of snow removal etc. • Roundabouts: too many poorly designed. Province will make taxpayers pay for construction of these accidents-waiting-to-happen. Tax payers will have to pay for lawsuits from the numerous accidents incurred due to poor design and eventually taxpayers will have to pay for the removal of roundabouts when the government finally wakes up and admits they were a poor choice and taxpayers will have to pay for the replacement [treatments]. • It’s not that people don’t know how to drive in them, rather it’s that people cannot drive safely in them due to poor design. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Often too small for size of vehicles (hence take up a lot of land). 2. Too many lanes for too short a space to exit, hence too many accidents (e.g. get in the left, cutting off two lanes of traffic, travel 500 ft to exit, cutting off two lanes of traffic. A good roundabout has one lane in one direction. Vehicle in the roundabout has right of way. Drivers can drive on that, in good weather, in daylight, no snow, pouring rain, etc. 3. Don’t think that the ‘experts’ have looked at everything. 4. No roundabouts needed at Line 26, Line 29 or the St Mary’s turnoff on Highway 7 south of Stratford. It’s fine the way it is. Don’t mess it up and make it worse. 	<p>The preferred crossing road treatments identified through the assessment and evaluation process will be included in the Recommended Plan. The implementation of the project will be funded by the Province. At the present time, there is no timeline or funding for the implementation of the project since the study is not yet complete.</p> <p>Your comments regarding the design and use of roundabouts have been noted. The roundabout design will accommodate larger trucks and farm equipment.</p>
<p>Segment A</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will bicycle lanes be incorporated into all or any of the segments? 2. Will railway crossing signal lights be installed, e.g. O’Loane? 3. Very good presentation, very easy to read and search for details. 	<p>Thank you for your positive feedback regarding the presentation material.</p> <p>Bicycle lanes are not proposed with the study limits.</p> <p>Bridges will be provided at all locations where the Final Selected Plan crosses the railway corridor.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You still have not crossed the first hurdle in this process. Prove the amount of traffic in the future warrants this magnitude of a 	<p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-</p>

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<p>project. No ones ever given me the simple math to prove it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why you want to move the commuters south of Stratford when most want to go into Stratford and north to the new subdivision and the new McCarthy Road extension that will draw the west end community north on to McCarthy to the west. • Stratford's own count proves this already on Romeo Street. 	<p>western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>Municipal planning forecasts indicate that the population in New Hamburg and Baden is expected to almost triple by 2031. The increased population and employment for the Region of Waterloo, designated by the Growth Plan with input from the municipalities, will have a strong influence on the nature of travel demands between South/Central Ontario, including the entire study area, and this emerging growth area. The Region of Waterloo will continue to act as a hub for employment and services to outlying communities in this part of Ontario. Given the long-term vision for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and the influence it will have on the outlying transportation systems that feed into the area, the Ministry is confident that traffic volumes in the study area will continue to increase at rates that will require capacity and operational expansions to Highway 7&8 within the 30 year planning timeframe.</p> <p>It is widely recognised by the local community and the project study team that forecasted population and employment growth in Perth County and the City of Stratford is very low. However, the role and function of Highway 7&8 serves more than a local need. A comprehensive Travel Pattern Survey was undertaken to determine who the road users are, purpose of travel, their targeted destination and the route taken. Through this effort, MTO recorded over 9,200 survey responses which revealed a very high intensity of travel within the corridor between Stratford and Waterloo Region. The main travel flows extending beyond the study area included Grand Bend, Bayfield, Goderich and other Lake Huron vacation areas. There are also strong ties to major urban centres, most notably London, and the GTA, with lower levels of traffic to other centres such as Woodstock, Guelph, Cambridge and Hamilton.</p> <p>In addition, the corridor supports long-distance trucking that moves approximately \$24 million worth of goods daily, or \$9.0 billion annually. As traffic volumes continue to grow, so does the value of good.</p> <p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>The detailed analysis, utilizing origin destination travel survey information and 103 travel zones developed and refined specifically for the study area, determined that from Stratford to New Hamburg there will be a road capacity deficiency of one lane in each direction in the area road network which includes provincial and municipal roadways by 2031 (i.e. 4 lanes on a single provincial highway are required). Accordingly, the study is investigating 4-lane alternatives on a single facility from New Hamburg to Stratford. West of Stratford there is not a capacity deficiency, but there is a need to link the provincial highway system. Accordingly, the study is investigating 2-lane alternatives west of Stratford.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix up Road 33 / Pork Road. • Fix up Highway 8 through Shakespeare. • Stop wasting our money. 	<p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as paving Perth Line 33 and Vivian Street and/or localized improvements to Highway 7&8 through Shakespeare, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward as they will have environmental impacts without providing the required transportation benefits.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Pics that have been proposed over the last months seem so focused on a design that would perhaps better suit Toronto area type traffic and not the needs of our Stratford and area community. I believe it impacts the environment and a huge agriculture sector that is completely unnecessary. I have studied and read some of your reports and the projected traffic volume and population numbers do not demand such a large project which will cost millions. I am saddened that the proposal of using the existing 7&8 highway has been closed. Many people are in favour of simply upgrading the existing highway and I feel the project team at AECOM simply is not listening to the community's needs and are ignoring our practical ideas. The many roundabouts and bridges / rail crossings which have been added on this new PIC are simply going to have drivers in a tail spin by the time they arrive to Stratford. It really seems 'overkill' this new PIC proposal. It is my desire that this study group would more on the need of this project by zoning in on the numbers, facts, slow population growth, heavy farming area which will make transportation of implements very dangerous and so much more. I believe the people of this area deserve a re-look at the original PIC of using the existing highway which the MTO already owns. It is unjust how our ideas are falling on deaf ears. Agricultural land is a priceless gem for the people of Canada. Why is this road unnecessarily chewing up so much farm land. Please consider using the existing highway as a 4 lane going into Shakespeare. 	<p>Your concerns regarding the potential impacts of the Preliminary Design Alternatives on the agricultural community as well as preference for the use of existing Highway 7&8 throughout the study corridor has been noted.</p> <p>During the 'Detailed Planning' phase, consideration was given to expansion of existing Highway 7&8 through Shakespeare. This alternative was not preferred through a process of comparative evaluation, as detailed in Report G, so it was not carried forward. Further, expansion of existing Highway 7&8 through Stratford does not address several of the problems the study set out to address, specifically transportation capacity and safety and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Stratford so this alternative was not carried forward.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including potential mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All segments should have a continuous left turn lane, especially if it is two lanes. This is because it can be very difficult turning left with farm equipment. If roundabouts are chosen, make sure they are at least 2 lanes as farm equipment is very large and only getting larger over the years coming. I think lights would be better as people do not know how to use roundabouts. <p>Segment D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting Line 33 to 7&8 is necessary for current traffic. How much traffic goes from Road 110 onto 7&8, is it necessary to make the big loop into farmland to connect all 3 roads together? <p>Segment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking the route along the current 7&8 will have the least disturbance to community farmland since the province has already bought land to the north side of the current 7&8. How much more would it cost to shoot straight through Shakespeare instead of north or south of the town? 	<p>Your preference for the provision of a continuous left turn lane throughout the study corridor and for signalized intersections rather than roundabouts has been noted. Continuous left turn lanes are being considered in a number of locations throughout the study corridor to facilitate left turn movements to and from properties along the corridor. The roundabout design will accommodate larger trucks and farm equipment.</p> <p>A curvilinear alignment is required per MTO standards for the Road 110 connections to both Highway 7&8 and Lorne Avenue.</p> <p>Widening Highway 7&8 through Shakespeare does not address several of the problems the study set out to address, specifically transportation capacity and safety and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare. Therefore, this alternative was not carried forward.</p>
<p>Segment E</p> <p>This is a comment on the two bypass options in Shakespeare.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The only logical and cost effective solution is 'no bypass'. The road should narrow from 5 lanes to 4, with reduced speeds, and then broaden to 5 lanes again west of Shakespeare. If the above is impossible, then the road should bypass south starting just past Road 106 – cross the tracks, follow the tracks, cross Highway 59, then before Road 108 it should come north again to rejoin the existing 7&8. This requires 1 more bridge on the train tracks but reduces the amount of farm land required and utilizes the lands already owned from Shakespeare to Road 110. 	<p>Provision of four lanes through Shakespeare does not address several of the problems the study set out to address, specifically transportation capacity and safety and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare. Therefore, this alternative was not carried forward.</p> <p>During the 'Detailed Planning' phase, consideration was given to a south bypass of Shakespeare reconnecting to existing Highway 7&8 west of Shakespeare. This alternative was not preferred through a process of comparative evaluation, as detailed in Report G, so it was not carried forward.</p>
<p>Segment B - Lorne Avenue / Line 32 / Old #8 Road 125</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B2: Support 2 lanes with continuous left turn lane with roundabouts (must be large enough for trucks) which eliminate running stops and traffic lights. <p>Segment C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C1: Support 4 lanes with continuous left turn lane with traffic lights, not roundabouts. <p>Segment D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D3: Support 4 lane with continuous left turn lane <p>Segment E/F</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E5 and F2: Support those alternatives that reduce impact on farmland. 	<p>Your preference for Alternatives B2, C1, D3, E5 and F2 has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>Segment G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The section of road needs a sign on the top of the hill heading towards Peel Street from Walker Road with blinking lights indicating "be prepared to stop when signals flashing". The sign exists approaching Nafziger from Baden on a much straighter, flatter piece of road. Township council endorse the addition of this sign and made a verbal request to Brenda Jamieson during her presentation to council a few weeks back. Please advise what else the Township council can do to facilitate the placement of this style of sign. <p>Segment H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The H3 alternative using the ministry owned land for the 2 interchange routes is clearly the obvious alternative. 	<p>Your request for a "be prepared to stop when signals flashing" sign on the west approach to the Peel Street intersection has been reviewed by the Ministry's Traffic Section. When reviewing the need for this type of warning sign, the Ministry of Transportation considers a number of factors including traffic operations, collision history, available sight distance, and human factors. The results of the Ministry's review did not support the need for this type of improvement.</p> <p>The Ministry recently undertook improvements to the traffic signal timing aimed at improving the overall traffic operation and safety at this intersection. Other safety measures currently in place are an eastbound Traffic Signal Ahead sign with a continuous flashing beacon and advanced loop detectors. The signs warn eastbound motorists that they are approaching a set of traffic signals and the loop detectors provide additional green time to motorists approaching the intersection.</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider two other alternatives that affect private land and the recreation complex when there is alternative that impacts ministry land twice (and 1 other business) may be necessary to show alternatives but option H3 stands out as the clear preference. 	<p>The Ministry will continue to monitor traffic operations at this location to determine the need for further improvements.</p> <p>Your preference for Alternative H3 has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>Segment G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please maintain the current traffic signal intersections at Peel / Haysville and Hamilton / Bleams. Also, for eastbound lanes, west of Peel / Haysville, place a signal indicating traffic light ahead changing – “prepare to stop”. 	<p>Your preference for Alternative G1 (i.e. retention of signalized intersections at Peel/Haysville and Hamilton/Bleams) has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>Your request for a “be prepared to stop when signals flashing” sign on the west approach to the Peel Street intersection has been reviewed by the Ministry’s Traffic Section. When reviewing the need for this type of warning sign, the Ministry of Transportation considers a number of factors including traffic operations, collision history, available sight distance, and human factors. The results of the Ministry’s review did not support the need for this type of improvement.</p> <p>The Ministry recently undertook improvements to the traffic signal timing aimed at improving the overall traffic operation and safety at this intersection. Other safety measures currently in place are an eastbound Traffic Signal Ahead sign with a continuous flashing beacon and advanced loop detectors. The signs warn eastbound motorists that they are approaching a set of traffic signals and the loop detectors provide additional green time to motorists approaching the intersection.</p> <p>The Ministry will continue to monitor traffic operations at this location to determine the need for further improvements.</p>
<p>Segment G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widening the highway (G1) looks to be the better option in terms of land use, using existing corridor, traffic flow. Good one on one communication by persons present to answer questions. Information was clearly presented. 	<p>Thank you for your positive feedback regarding the study team and the responses they provided to your questions.</p> <p>Your preference for Alternative G1 (i.e. retention of signalized intersections at Peel/Haysville and Hamilton/Bleams) has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>Entering directly onto 7&8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have been a lifelong resident of the current highway – home residence is located at [REDACTED]. I also own a second property at [REDACTED]. Essentially, I own properties on opposing sides of the existing highway. How can you claim that I will have safe access between properties that are not directly across from each other? This will be impossible. Also, how can you assure me that I will be able enter my property or exit safely onto a high speed highway. This highway will be extremely unsafe for local residents and daily commuters. This highway should be design as a non-access highway that does not contain laneway access. Alternatively, Pork Street and Vivian Road should be paved in the short term in order to provide for current needs. 	<p>Your concerns regarding access and safety have been noted. One of the objectives the study set out to address is safety concerns in the study area. For the highway section between Shakespeare and Regional Road 1, ‘long-term upgrades’ are being reviewed as part of the Preliminary Design Phase. Potential upgrades include improvements to the roadway cross section (e.g. number of lanes and shoulder area) and profile. Additional improvements could include implementation of snow drift mitigation measures. In select locations, the study team may also examine opportunities to consolidate and/or realign access / driveway entrances to improve highway operations and the safety performance for this section of the highway for both the highway users and the adjacent landowners</p> <p>Alternatives, such as paving Perth Line 33 and Vivian Street, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward as they will have environmental impacts without providing the required transportation benefits.</p>
<p>Segment G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternative G1 preferred Need to ensure pedestrian (dedicated) routes over the highway are included, including access for pedestrians to Segment H Need noise barriers For G1, the dedicated left turn lanes should not face each other Is there a rail option? 	<p>Your preference for Alternative G1 (i.e. retention of signalized intersections at Peel/Haysville and Hamilton/Bleams) has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>Segment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preference is for the southerly route below Shakespeare because the connections with the other segments (*D and F) make the driving more direct. Rather than use traffic lights and overpasses at road intersections, roundabouts make the most sense to me. 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare and the use of roundabouts has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public</p>

Comments	MTO Response
	review and comment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a former resident of Tavistock, and a soon-to-be resident of Stratford, I have taken great interest in this study and debate over the past years. IN MY OPINION, any solution that does not use the existing Hwy 7&8 corridor is ludicrous, and an egregious waste of valuable and highly productive farmland. I strongly urge you to adopt the 'North Bypass' of Shakespeare option. 	<p>Your preference for a north bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am writing this letter to express my concern and objection to the proposed South By-Pass Route around Shakespeare that is being considered. I object to the South By-Pass Route for a number of reasons: Firstly, I question if the highway expansion is even necessary. As a resident of Shakespeare I have not witnessed any significant traffic delays. I totally understand the need for future planning however when is it anticipated that traffic will become a problem? I see no evidence of this happening in the short or long term. The recent Beacon Herald poll is currently reporting that 90% of people feel the highway is fine the way it is now. Secondly, I object to using agricultural land to being used to expand the Highway. The South By-Pass Route will be cutting into farm land longer than any of the other alternatives that I have seen proposed. This seems excessively wasteful and I am honestly surprised it is being seriously considered when our society is becoming increasingly environmentally conscious. Thirdly, I object to the South By-Pass Route as it will bring the highway significantly closer to the houses on the South Side of Shakespeare. The Residents along the South Side of Shakespeare did not purchase their properties with any knowledge of a Highway being placed this close to their properties. This will have a significant impact on our property values and the noise level in South Shakespeare. I have heard it said that this shouldn't matter because there is already a train track in South Shakespeare. It definitely does matter - residents of South Shakespeare purchased their property with full knowledge of a train (not a highway). Also trains only go by a few times each day where highway traffic is constant. Another concern I have is the need to purchase additional land. Why purchase additional land and then not use land that has already been purchased? This would be a waste of taxpayer money. If it is deemed that an expansion of Highway 7&8 must occur (which as stated earlier I question) then I suggest that other alternatives be considered once again. Going straight through Shakespeare (along the current route) most certainly will do the least amount of damage to agricultural land. The farms along the highway have expected this and many of them (especially between Stratford and Shakespeare) have not made use of this land for agricultural purposes. I understand that going through the center of Shakespeare will upset quite a few people in the town itself. I understand their concern however they all did purchase property along a highway unlike those of us in South Shakespeare. The proposed North By-Pass Route does follow the existing highway for a significantly longer length than the South By-Pass Route so I see it as significantly better than the South By-Pass route as well. This route would not require as much additional land be purchased. For these reasons the North By-Pass should be preferred over the South By-Pass route. Has the concept of routing the highway along Perth Line 33 all the way from New Hamburg been considered? It seems that this route should also be considered. This route would have the least amount of impact on the residents of Shakespeare. On a slightly different point I have another concern – I read in the Beacon Herald the comments of a representative from the “Shakespeare Area Residents Association”. I have no knowledge of this organization. Their name implies that they are speaking on behalf of the residents of Shakespeare – how can they speak on behalf of the Residents of Shakespeare if they have never asked the residents of Shakespeare their opinion? If they want to speak on behalf of the town of Shakespeare I suggest that they get in touch with the residents of Shakespeare and find out what we really think and then accurately report their findings. There are a significant number of residents who object to the South By-Pass Route. It definitely appears that this organization is not speaking on behalf of our entire town. 	<p>Your opposition to a south bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>During the ‘Transportation Planning’ phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as paving Perth Line 33 and/or expansion of Highway 7&8 through Shakespeare, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward as they will have environmental impacts without providing the required transportation benefits.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to a recent Beacon Herald newspaper article questioning the need for expansion of the existing highway 7&8 I would like to comment. I strongly disagree with the writer of this article as well as the opinion of certain local politicians. I feel there is a strong need for expansion due to many safety concerns along this stretch of highway. All you have to do is Google car accidents along this stretch of road. I travel this road daily and see the same issues. People driving much too fast, passing unsafely. People trying to enter private driveways and being rear-ended due to impatient drivers behind them. As recent as Aug. 11th there was a near fatal accident directly west of Shakespeare due to a driver passing (while in town) and being unable to complete the pass. Also another accident recently east of Shakespeare which sent 9 people to hospital due to a driver trying to enter a private driveway. This is just two of many. There are many other reasons to expand, but for this reason alone the expansion should go ahead. 	<p>Your support for improvements to the Highway 7&8 corridor and in particular the north bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That being said, the most recent route going North around Shakespeare is in my and many others opinion the BEST option. Shakespeare should most definitely be bypassed. All you have to do is look at the problems in Morriston, ON. Along the Highway 6 corridor between Kitchener and Hamilton has been having for the last 30 years or so. In closing I would just like to say what is more important, saving lives or a very small piece of a massive agricultural section that in my opinion would hardly be noticed. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Highway 7&8 at Peel Street (and / Haysville Road) b) 7&8, New Hamburg West to Stratford a. The traffic lights at this intersection are a concern, trucks coming from the west are going through this light as it turns red. If they are travelling at 80km/h it is likely they will run the light, we see this happening constantly. An easy safety fix would be a sign and flashing light, as per the one at Nafziger Road when coming from the east. There is no need to wait until someone is injured or worse yet killed at this intersection. b. Is this not the critical area at this time? Why not do the construction in stages and build a 4 lane (continue the four lane) to Stratford. 	<p>Your request for a “be prepared to stop when signals flashing” sign on the west approach to the Peel Street intersection has been reviewed by the Ministry’s Traffic Section. When reviewing the need for this type of warning sign, the Ministry of Transportation considers a number of factors including traffic operations, collision history, available sight distance, and human factors. The results of the Ministry’s review did not support the need for this type of improvement.</p> <p>The Ministry recently undertook improvements to the traffic signal timing aimed at improving the overall traffic operation and safety at this intersection. Other safety measures currently in place are an eastbound Traffic Signal Ahead sign with a continuous flashing beacon and advanced loop detectors. The signs warn eastbound motorists that they are approaching a set of traffic signals and the loop detectors provide additional green time to motorists approaching the intersection.</p> <p>The Ministry will continue to monitor traffic operations at this location to determine the need for further improvements.</p> <p>At the present time, there is no timeline or funding for the implementation of the project since the study is not yet complete.</p> <p>During later phases of the study process, a strategy will be developed with respect to when and where the identified safety, operational and capacity improvements should be implemented over the 30-year planning horizon. While an implementation strategy will be developed for the recommended improvements, the actual construction timing will be subject to the availability of funding as the forecasted needs become realized.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can’t believe that we are talking about such a disruption and cost when I think that a quick and easy solution stares us in the face. Why not pave Line 33 all the way out and create the truck route so many want by turning bypass traffic at the existing lights just west of New Hamburg and then turning at Line 33 which takes you right into the south/industrial side of Stratford. The portion of #33 that is already paved was built up and improved by Perth County for that reason specifically. It’s a shame when we don’t take advantage of the forethought of smart people! An overpass could possibly be built to cross #59 at a fraction of the cost of other proposals. No matter what is decided, there will be disruptions to people but hasn’t that always been the case when dealing with progress? I believe this would be the least disruptive solution considering the #33 is already the well-used route that it was meant to be. 	<p>During the ‘Transportation Planning’ phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as paving Perth Line 33, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward as they will have environmental impacts without providing the required transportation benefits.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dear Project team, I have lived in Stratford for almost 25 years and travel 7 and 8 extensively. I have never been in a traffic jam in all that time. This road is fine as is. Please do nothing further. If you have to spend money do it widening roads in the GTA where it is needed. Thank you I have been a Stratford resident for almost 25 years and never once had a hold up on that highway. They should drop all plans and leave things the same. Who is pushing for this expansion? It makes no sense and I hate to think of the waste of money gone into the planning stage let alone if they actually do something. Also I’m a guy that hates getting stuck in traffic and would be very much in favour of this if it made any sense at all! PS If there are up stoppable forces behind this then the only solution that makes sense is to pave both shoulders and have alternating passing lanes-or as they once did on Hwy 69 north of Barrie- to Parry south have the slower traffic pull to the right and faster traffic pass on the left. There is plenty of room to do this without encroaching at all on farmland, and it would be much cheaper. Leave Shakespeare as a slight bottleneck-who cares for a savings of 30 seconds. You can time the light (at Shakespeare) differently-when it goes red for the main east-west route and green for north south leave it that way for only 10 seconds-which is more than enough to clear the traffic. Then the bottleneck would be less than 30 seconds. 	<p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>During the ‘Transportation Planning’ phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as passing lanes east and west of Shakespeare, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network and interference with the “downtown / historic crossroads” function of Shakespeare). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I attended the PIC in Shakespeare on July 25th related to the highway 7/8. I would like to say that I still like many people believe that four lanes is unnecessary and a huge waste of money. I believe that an improved two lane along the existing corridor and a paved extension to line 33 is the best alternative and the most popular with those that will be impacted. Of the proposed routes I support the north route as the lesser of two evils as it makes the best use of the existing route, as such wastes the least resources and has the least economic impact. I have great difficulty in believing published reports of the difference in farmland eaten up by the north route alternative. I believe that highway safety can be improved by levelling the highway from Shakespeare to New Hamburg and introducing regular photo radar(very effective in provinces where it is being used) 	<p>During the ‘Transportation Planning’ phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as paving Perth Line 33, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward as they will have environmental impacts without providing the required transportation benefits.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing,</p>

Comments	MTO Response
	<p>telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p> <p>Your preference for a north bypass of Shakespeare rather than a south bypass has been noted.</p> <p>For the highway section between Shakespeare and Regional Road 1, 'long-term upgrades' are being reviewed as part of the Preliminary Design Phase. Potential upgrades include improvements to the roadway cross section (e.g. number of lanes and shoulder area) and profile. Additional improvements could include implementation of snow drift mitigation measures. In select locations, the study team may also examine opportunities to consolidate and/or realign access / driveway entrances to improve highway operations and the safety performance for this section of the highway for both the highway users and the adjacent landowners</p> <p>Photo radar would not address the transportation problems and opportunities the study sets out to address. Further, photo radar is not currently used in Ontario; therefore this alternative cannot be considered.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well I am so happy to see metropolitan Stratford is getting this highway done. I am so tired of sitting in hours of traffic just to get to Kitchener (bumper to bumper) this is the best money spent ever. The other great thing is that instead of widening an existing highway, you are bright enough to instead make a new highway and use up that useless farm land, and yes the above is all sarcasm. Well done. 	<p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities. The detailed traffic analysis determined that there will be a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p> <p>Your opposition to the new segments of highway being considered as part of the preliminary design alternatives and your concerns regarding the potential impact on farm land have been noted.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greetings to whom it may concern, My name is [REDACTED] and my family has lived in and around Perth County ever since I can remember; I am so proud to call this part of Canada my home. I am deeply concerned about the impacts that changing the route of this highway could have on the hamlet of Shakespeare; my mother's relatives are from Trout Creek, Ontario and when Hwy 11 to North Bay was built the way it was, it by-passed all of the little towns, killing each one of them along the way. Please do not let the same thing happen to Shakespeare! Please learn from past mistakes and let history matter....we do not need 4 lanes to Kitchener. We can survive with 2. Thank you for your time. 	<p>Your concerns regarding the potential economic impacts associated with a north or south bypass of Shakespeare have been noted.</p> <p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>The detailed traffic analysis determined that there will be a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network. Since 2-lanes through Shakespeare does not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare, this alternative was not carried forward.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p>
<p>Segment E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the north bypass of Shakespeare goes through ... We would continue to need 2 entrances that offer east and west access to the highway for tractors and trailers (75' long) and that provides a safe means of turn around and space for the units coming off the road in our off hours when our gate is locked. We would need support to acquire acreage to the west to compensate for any lost acreage to our south. We would need support for permits to tear down and rebuild our building west or north. We would expect fair compensation for all costs involved in tearing down, rebuilding and but not limited to business interruption. 	<p>Your concerns regarding the potential impacts of the north bypass on your property / business have been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives, including the Shakespeare north and south bypass alternatives, will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>Compensation for loss of land and loss of business associated with the acquisition of land for the highway is determined on a case by case basis. Property negotiations are carried out on a market value basis and market value is determined based on an appraisal report. Individual property requirements will be confirmed during the Preliminary Design Phase.</p>
<p>Segment C, D and E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This most recent set of design alternatives for the 7&8 corridor include some improvements by using more of the existing highway. 	<p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<p>However, going around Shakespeare and cutting south to Line 33 still uses up valuable agricultural land which we feel isn't necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You state that the proposed new highway will be required to handle the traffic 30 from years now. Well the reality is this ... tourism in Stratford has dropped by 10% this year – a trend that has been going on for the last 4 / 5 years. The manufacturing base in Stratford is shrinking. Every year another plant closes to the point there must be 2,000,000 square feet of manufacturing facilities for sale in the City. The realistic approach would be to upgrade the entire existing Highway 7&8 connecting it to the 4 lanes at the east end of Stratford, while adding a left turn / 3rd lane through the village of Shakespeare. Let the City of Stratford look after Lorne Avenue and access to it from Ontario Street. You are now at least 4 years and millions of dollars into this study. Isn't it time to go back to your political masters and give them the realistic facts of what should be done? Isn't it time to do the right thing and save valuable agricultural land, rural homes, property values and Ontario tax payers tens of millions of dollars? As Premier McGuinty said about moving the natural gas power generating plants out of Oakville, "It's never too late to do the right thing". 	<p>western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>Provision of three lanes through Shakespeare and utilizing existing Highway 7&8 through Stratford does not address several of the problems the study set out to address, specifically transportation capacity and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare and Stratford. Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p>
<p>Segment H</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our concern involves the proposed changes to the intersection of Highway 7&8 at Nafziger Road. Our home is on the east side of Nafziger Road, just south of Highway 7&8. Depending on the alternative design chosen, we may be impacted. Alternative H1 will bring the traffic noise closer to our property. Alternative H2 would have a slightly lesser impact. Alternative H3 would have a ramp coming close to our property increasing the noise level significantly. We hope that this concern will be considered and that sound barriers will be erected to alleviate this problem. 	<p>Your concerns regarding potential noise impacts to your property based on the alternatives under consideration for the Nafziger Road intersection have been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>Noise mitigation measures will be defined during the Preliminary Design Phase of the study through a detailed noise assessment for the preferred route. Mitigation measures will be employed where appropriate. The results of the detailed noise assessment will also be presented for public review and comment at PIC #6.</p>
<p>Line 33 between Romeo Street and Road 111</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not agree using Line 33 to come into Stratford. New road should be further south to join into Highway 7 and Line 29 or near. <p>Comments RE Proposed Line 33</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definitely not in favour of a median in the middle of the road. Our house is located within the City of Stratford with a majority of our travel into Stratford (west on Line 33). With a median it will be necessary to go to Road 111 and then back into Stratford (distance from our house to Road 111 is █ km.) This would affect all homes on this block. Would prefer turn lane which would not deny us the ability to go into town west on Line 33. Two lanes on landfill side. This would leave one lane on the south side and bring the edge of the right-of-way to almost the edge of our █ drive (little more than a car length to the house). Also, we have a wide driveway █ Access and maneuverability would be hampered with road widening. Option of 2 or 3 lanes on south side. Have one lane on south side severely impacts our front lawn area. We have no desire to live on a 5 lane highway with additional traffic. If an agreeable market value for our property could be decided upon, our property could be purchased by MTO as it would undoubtedly mean the house would have to be removed. I understand from █ that they would have no objections to losing the house on their property. This is an option that could be further investigated as the process continues. All PIC meetings, the property representatives indicated that properties severely impacted would be purchased. 	<p>Your concerns regarding the potential impacts to your property based on the Preliminary Design Alternatives under consideration have been noted.</p> <p>Compensation associated with the acquisition of land for the highway is determined on a case by case basis. Property negotiations are carried out on a market value basis and market value is determined based on an appraisal report. Individual property requirements will be confirmed during the Preliminary Design Phase.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including potential mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will be greatly affected by this design plan as it goes right in front of our house. We are told it won't require us moving the house or losing the house to demolition, that's the good news. The bad news is we will have to have a 4 lane highway on our front lawn. We are not getting any younger and if this happens this may require us to make daily trips out of lane way across a 4 lane highway – not very desirable or safe. Aside from the personal sides of this issue (which we understand are not important) we question the fact that when this super highway hits the city of Stratford limits it is going to become a bottle neck because as far as we know there is no agreement with the city to work with the province on this. Sounds like complete chaos to us and since we are so close to the city limits this will affect us also. Quite frankly, we are sick of all this talk of building this highway! We were led to believe that at the February meetings the design going south of Shakespeare was in the final stage of approval and now this! Every time you bring this to public attention you cause our property value to drop! Please make up your minds so we can all move forward! 	<p>Your concerns regarding the potential impacts to your property based on the Preliminary Design Alternatives under consideration have been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including potential mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In regards to PIC #5 in the Highway 7&8 Transportation Corridor Planning and Class EA Study. We are pleased to see you are considering alternative routes which destroy less farmland and make better use of existing roads. This is a unique area of quality, irreplaceable agricultural land which is vital to the community. Land prices continue to rise. (land is currently trading at over \$20,000.00 an acre). Any route which uses the least amount of farmland needs to be the route of choice. 	<p>Your preference for a north bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Northern By-Pass Route uses less agricultural land, and uses more of the existing roadways making this the wiser route of choice. 	<p>review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send me documentation via email on % of truck traffic and passenger vehicle traffic (by segment) for proposed transportation corridor east (Shakespeare) and Stratford to New Hamburg 	<p>The attached table provides the information you requested with respect to percentage of truck traffic and passenger vehicle traffic between Stratford and New Hamburg on a segment by segment basis.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By using the north by-pass you will be putting truck traffic right down Perth Rd 107 directly thru the village. Defeating the purpose of south by-pass. All the trucks starting and stopping at lights pure stupidity!!!! Asinine directly on a route that children walk to school. There are numerous reasons for the south by-pass as opposed to north and I thought they were all settled when the southern route was going thru. 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I agree that using acres and acres of farmland, and bypassing Shakespeare (it would destroy it) simply to improve traffic flow is wrong. However I use the highway and agree that traffic flow can be a problem. A solution which I have not seen proposed is, provide passing lanes in those areas where this would be fairly simple. This solution is beautiful in its simplicity. Uses little farm land; low cost; does not need to bypass Shakespeare; no need to replace railway overpass; will allow traffic to flow with few restrictions. I have seen this approach work in many places. Please consider it. 	<p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as passing lanes east and west of Shakespeare, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I read at the New Hamburg Independent, that you are still looking for input to make the highway 7/8 safer for the New Hamburg area. I have some additional points, to maybe think about: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Replace the mesh fence between Joseph Street and the Highway with noise reduction walls to reduce the noise going through the whole village. Build a pedestrian tunnel from Joseph Street to the other side of the Highway to get to the shopping center there. The way over the crossing on Peel Street is very dangerous for pedestrians or bike drivers. Build tunnels on Peel Street, Hamilton Road / Bleams Road and Nafziger Road under the Highway, then open an Intersection for New Hamburg behind Nafziger Rd. and at Walker Rd. to connect the area with the highway. I don't know if somebody else mentioned these things but this is what gets into my mind first, when I read the request for comments. 	<p>Noise mitigation measures, such as the need for noise barriers, will be defined during the Preliminary Design Phase of the study through a detailed noise assessment for the preferred route. Mitigation measures will be employed where appropriate. The results of the detailed noise assessment will also be presented for public review and comment at PIC #6.</p> <p>Interchanges which include bridges over Highway 7&8 are being considered at the Peel/Haysville, Hamilton/Bleams and Nafziger Road intersections (Alternative G2 and Alternatives H1, H2 and H3). For the interchange alternatives, pedestrian would cross the highway via the bridges. For Alternative G1, pedestrian crossing signs will continue to be provided at the intersection. In both cases, the existing pedestrian crossing under the Nith River bridge to the east of the intersection will be retained.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including proposed mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University student studying urban transportation. Interested in additional information on the project. 	<p>Additional information about the study can be found on the study website at www.7and8corridorstudy.ca.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good afternoon, I have a question regarding the northbound route being studied as an alternative to the southbound route. We own privately and jointly several properties along the 7&8 east of Shakespeare and we cannot find any drawings that show potential farms affected as per Segment E options E4 & E5. Would you please send to us any maps that would outline the properties affected the closest property to Shakespeare [REDACTED]. 	<p>A copy of the north bypass plan is enclosed for your reference. The plan information can also be found on the study website at www.7and8corridorstudy.ca on the Public Information Centre page (PIC #6 materials).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As an independent owner and resident in the New Hamburg/Baden area, we are concerned with the proposed changes to highway 7 & 8 and how it will negatively impact our business (and other businesses), and our community. We support and endorse the attached letter sent to you by a local group of independent business owners and concur with their objectives, comments, and concerns. We look forward to further consultation regarding this issue and look forward to a mutually agreeable resolution. <p>LETTER FROM LOCAL GROUP DATED OCTOBER 29, 2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a group of independent business owners in New Hamburg, Baden, and the surrounding area affected by the proposed changes to Highway 7 & 8, we would like to express our comments and concerns regarding the proposed plans. The scope of this letter will address the section of highway from the intersection of Regional Road 51 (Foundry St./Wilmot Centre Road) to Regional Road 1 (Perth Line). <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To move traffic as effectively as possible without creating new barriers to access the business areas. 	<p>Your comments and concerns regarding the preliminary design alternatives under consideration for the New Hamburg area and your preference for Alternative G1 (i.e. retention of signalized intersections at Peel/Haysville and Hamilton/Bleams) have been noted.</p> <p>The need to undertake the current Highway 7&8 Transportation Corridor Planning and Class EA Study was initially identified in the Study Design Report completed by MTO in 2005. A comprehensive traffic assessment was conducted at the outset of the current study using current traffic data and was again revisited in 2009 in response to comments received from some municipalities and stakeholders to generate a lower growth forecast to better reflect current trends and patterns of growth in the Analysis Area.</p> <p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>Municipal planning forecasts indicate that the population in New Hamburg and Baden is expected to almost triple by 2031. The increased population and employment for the Region of Waterloo, designated by the Growth Plan with input from the municipalities, will have a strong influence on the nature of travel demands between South/Central Ontario, including the entire study</p>

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<p>2. To utilize the existing highway 7 & 8 route.</p> <p>3. To avoid the construction of interchanges or bridges which would divert traffic away from the local businesses and recreational areas.</p> <p>Addressing the Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We want to see traffic continue to move effectively and safely through this corridor but bearing in mind, that a major success factor for small business is the opportunity for travelers to find and access our retail stores, services and restaurants. The proposed interchanges, bridges and overpasses will deter travelers and remove the opportunity for our local business to succeed. We believe that any diversion of traffic away from small business storefronts will be economically devastating. 2. We would like to see the current highway utilized in the safest manner possible. We are in favour of your current plan that uses the existing highway 7&8 route through the town of New Hamburg. Any future consideration away from the existing route will fail to deliver our first objective. Open consultation with local businesses and residents is essential to promote open dialogue and the ideations that are best for all affected by any highway changes. We do not want or see a need for alternate routes. 3. We do not support the most recent proposal, which includes a combination of interchanges, bridges and service roads at Peel Street and Hamilton/Bleams Road. This would move traffic through and past our local businesses resulting in economic devastation for many of them. Our preference would be to offer better opportunities for travelers to access our shopping and recreational areas, which will further stimulate economic activity. Once again an open consultation with local businesses and residents is essential to promote the ideations that are best for all affected by any highway changes. <p>Additional Concerns and Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In reviewing the various documents available on www.7and8corridorstudy.ca, we believe the projections in both traffic growth and the population growth have been greatly exaggerated. • Population growth to the west of the New Hamburg has had little growth and based on our own research, in Huron County, the population is shrinking. As per information from Statistics Canada, the compound annual population growth in Perth and Huron County from 1996 through 2011 has grown less than one tenth of one percent per year. As a good portion of the daily commuter traffic that would travel on this highway is derived from these geographical locations, we believe that the MTO report has overstated the traffic flow in the future. • Additionally, the MTO report talks to the growth of areas to the east of New Hamburg and Baden, which in our opinion, will not affect significantly the traffic growth that has been projected. We believe that very little of this population will travel in this direction, particularly daily commuters as job growth will more likely flourish in Kitchener-Waterloo area. We believe any reference to growth west of New Hamburg and Baden should be significantly tempered in the report. • Part of the growth referred to in the MTO report, pertains to growth in Kitchener-Waterloo and the Greater Golden Horseshoe areas. Since there is no job growth or major recreational growth and activity west of New Hamburg and Baden, it is our opinion that there is no reason to project increased traffic, even during the summer months. • In the original MTO report, it was projected the population of Stratford would be 33,300 in 2011 when in fact the population in 2011, according to Statscan, is 30,866 resulting in an overstatement of 8% in a very short projection period. Based on our own research we estimate the population of Stratford has only grown by just over 10,000 people since 1961 representing less than 1% annual growth over 50 years. We believe that both Perth and Huron County growth projections have been overstated by 5% during the same period. Additionally, at current growth rates, the population of Perth and Huron Counties combined will only grow by about 2,400 people by 2031. The study further shows population statistics from areas such as London and Middlesex County, Lambton County, Elgin County, and Chatham-Kent that will virtually have no effect on traffic flow or growth in this area. • The area to the west of New Hamburg and Baden is mainly comprised of the best farmland in North America where, of course, farming is the main industry. The family farm business is shrinking where large farm corporations are growing. This in turn results in a low or non-existent population growth as the farm corporations need as much land as possible to grow their crops and raise livestock. To add to this, the future highway improvements may use up to 500 acres of the best farmland in North America – for the purpose of saving a traveler about 1 – 2 minutes in their overall travel time in this corridor. • In closing, the members of our group of independent business owners are not in favour of the proposed changes to highway 7 & 8 as it will have a large negative impact on the economic viability of our community and a negative impact on any future growth and development. We request that concrete plans for the section of highway 7 & 8 described above be developed and signed off in an expeditious manner. In order to do so, the projections of traffic flow must be reviewed and further consultation with residents and business owners must occur so that the most favourable solution can be obtained. 	<p>area, and this emerging growth area. The Region of Waterloo will continue to act as a hub for employment and services to outlying communities in this part of Ontario. Given the long-term vision for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and the influence it will have on the outlying transportation systems that feed into the area, the Ministry is confident that traffic volumes in the study area will continue to increase at rates that will require capacity and operational expansions to Highway 7&8 within the 30 year planning timeframe.</p> <p>It is widely recognised by the local community and the project study team that forecasted population and employment growth in Perth County and the City of Stratford is very low. However, the role and function of Highway 7&8 serves more than a local need. A comprehensive Travel Pattern Survey was undertaken to determine who the road users are, purpose of travel, their targeted destination and the route taken. Through this effort, MTO recorded over 9,200 survey responses which revealed a very high intensity of travel within the corridor between Stratford and Waterloo Region. The main travel flows extending beyond the study area included Grand Bend, Bayfield, Goderich and other Lake Huron vacation areas. There are also strong ties to major urban centres, most notably London, and the GTA, with lower levels of traffic to other centres such as Woodstock, Guelph, Cambridge and Hamilton.</p> <p>In addition, the corridor supports long-distance trucking that moves approximately \$24 million worth of goods daily, or \$9.0 billion annually. As traffic volumes continue to grow, so does the value of good.</p> <p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>The detailed analysis, utilizing origin destination travel survey information and 103 travel zones developed and refined specifically for the study area, determined that from Stratford to New Hamburg there will be a road capacity deficiency of one lane in each direction in the area road network which includes provincial and municipal roadways by 2031 (i.e. 4 lanes on a single provincial highway are required). Accordingly, the study is investigating 4-lane alternatives on a single facility from New Hamburg to Stratford. West of Stratford there is not a capacity deficiency, but there is a need to link the provincial highway system. Accordingly, the study is investigating 2-lane alternatives west of Stratford.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>We look forward to your continued involvement in the study process.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am the principal owner of [REDACTED] a large land holding [REDACTED] near Haysville Road and offer the following comments. <p>My comments are limited to the area including the 4 traffic signals in the New Hamburg area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I drive the highway between Kitchener and New Hamburg in both directions many times a week at various times of the day and 	<p>Your comments and concerns regarding the preliminary design alternatives under consideration for the New Hamburg area and your preference for retention of the existing signalized intersections through New Hamburg, with the introduction of a reduced speed limit, have been noted.</p> <p>The need to undertake the current Highway 7&8 Transportation Corridor Planning and Class EA Study was initially identified in the</p>

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<p>evening and it is seldom that there are more than 5 or 6 vehicles stopped at any of the traffic signals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your estimate is a 50% increase during the next 20 years. Even if traffic doubled, there would be little inconvenience to the drivers. There are 2 distinct considerations. 1) the right of the drivers using the highway to travel with as little inconvenience as possible. 2) the rights of all the property owners and businesses whose lives are detrimentally affected by your study. The property owners and businesses could be considered the stakeholders and the drivers the invaders. The focus of the study is only on the drivers and no consideration is given to the stakeholders. Therefore, the study is flawed because your job depends on the invaders. The first question is: are any improvements necessary. Your study is so distant that it is hypothetical. It's a waste of taxpayer money at this time. Only the study team, who benefit directly, see it differently. Assuming traffic will increase as you suggest, the question becomes should the highway be improved and if so, when and how? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the speed to 60 km/hour and synchronize the signals based on speed. Use technology rather than the shovel. I've been on several roads in USA that carry more traffic over greater distances using this technology. Changing the speed rather than the structure is the least expensive by far and will allow more traffic to use the current infrastructure. Synchronization based on speed encourages drivers to maintain the speed limit and is also proven to be the safest alternative. It's well recognized that speed kills. It may add a minute or 2 to the travel time but eliminates the frustration of waiting at lights. If you're approaching from a side road, you expect to wait for the light. THIS IS THE ONLY REASONABLE SOLUTION! It was proposed in your PIM at the New Hamburg community center 3 or 4 years ago. There's never been any reason given why it isn't being considered and an option. The 2nd least expensive and 2nd favored option if you won't accept #1 is to increase the width to 3 lanes but should only be considered when traffic reaches much greater numbers such as 100,000 vehicles. Pedestrian bridges should be considered at Hamilton Road and Peel / Haysville Road. The most expensive, most disruptive to the lives of the people who live in the study area and the most unnecessary option is building overpasses with 'cloverleaf' style ramps to maintain a 100 km speed limit. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> It steals the rights of property ownership that are expected in a free country like Canada without compensation. Let me explain. If you're a property owner 'in the path of a proposed on / off ramp' you're screwed. The government has no money to purchase your property. The government will not purchase your property based on a study that hypothecates 20 years into the future. In the meantime, if you choose to improve your property (say a new kitchen or addition if a home or an addition, expansion or change of use if industrial or commercial) you'll either be prohibited or unfairly not compensated if the government should decide and when they decide to take your property. In the meantime your life is frozen for 20 years. How can an owner sell with such a cloud hanging over their property rights? Who compensates them today for that? I drive major highways such as I-95 in Miami regularly. They're not unique. Just the ones I'm familiar with. The proposed ramps in your study are antiquated solutions. Most existing ramps and all new ramps are located immediately beside the highway and terminate or start at a traffic light at the overpass. I-95 is a 6 lane 70 mile per hour road and often the ramps are 2 lanes wide. Traffic volumes are equal or greater than Toronto. Similar ramps are found on the 401 east of Toronto and on 417 in Ottawa. It would be less expensive than your proposal and be the least disruptive to businesses and homeowners. Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. I hope you actually take the time to give consideration to them. I have many more valid comments such as the effect on emergency response times, the cost to local business merchants in New Hamburg's downtown, etc but fear you'll consider them a watering down and not give my comments the value they deserve. 	<p>Study Design Report completed by MTO in 2005. A comprehensive traffic assessment was conducted at the outset of the current study using current traffic data and was again revisited in 2009 in response to comments received from some municipalities and stakeholders to generate a lower growth forecast to better reflect current trends and patterns of growth in the Analysis Area.</p> <p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>Municipal planning forecasts indicate that the population in New Hamburg and Baden is expected to almost triple by 2031. The increased population and employment for the Region of Waterloo, designated by the Growth Plan with input from the municipalities, will have a strong influence on the nature of travel demands between South/Central Ontario, including the entire study area, and this emerging growth area. The Region of Waterloo will continue to act as a hub for employment and services to outlying communities in this part of Ontario. Given the long-term vision for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and the influence it will have on the outlying transportation systems that feed into the area, the Ministry is confident that traffic volumes in the study area will continue to increase at rates that will require capacity and operational expansions to Highway 7&8 within the 30 year planning timeframe.</p> <p>It is widely recognised by the local community and the project study team that forecasted population and employment growth in Perth County and the City of Stratford is very low. However, the role and function of Highway 7&8 serves more than a local need. A comprehensive Travel Pattern Survey was undertaken to determine who the road users are, purpose of travel, their targeted destination and the route taken. Through this effort, MTO recorded over 9,200 survey responses which revealed a very high intensity of travel within the corridor between Stratford and Waterloo Region. The main travel flows extending beyond the study area included Grand Bend, Bayfield, Goderich and other Lake Huron vacation areas. There are also strong ties to major urban centres, most notably London, and the GTA, with lower levels of traffic to other centres such as Woodstock, Guelph, Cambridge and Hamilton.</p> <p>In addition, the corridor supports long-distance trucking that moves approximately \$24 million worth of goods daily, or \$9.0 billion annually. As traffic volumes continue to grow, so does the value of good.</p> <p>Additional traffic analysis was undertaken to support the generation of preliminary design alternatives. For the at-grade intersection alternative, additional through lanes are required on Highway 7&8 from west of Peel Street to east of Hamilton Street to maintain acceptable operations for the longer term.</p> <p>Highway 7&8 is classified as a Rural Arterial Highway with a Class III Special Controlled Access designation under the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act. The future plan for Highway 7&8 will maintain the current functional classification and a posted speed of 80 km /hr from New Hamburg westerly to the east end of Stratford.</p> <p>For Alternative G1, pedestrian crossing signs will continue to be provided at the intersection. For Alternative G2 (i.e. interchange at Peel/Haysville), pedestrians would use the bridge over Highway 7&8 at the Peel Street / Haysville Road intersection to cross the highway. In both cases, the existing pedestrian crossing under the Nith River bridge to the east of the intersection will be retained.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>At the present time, there is no timeline or funding for the implementation of the project since the study is not yet complete.</p> <p>During later phases of the study process, a strategy will be developed with respect to when and where the identified safety, operational and capacity improvements should be implemented over the 30-year planning horizon. While an implementation strategy will be developed for the recommended improvements, the actual construction timing will be subject to the availability of funding as the forecasted needs become realized.</p> <p>Compensation associated with the acquisition of land for the highway is determined on a case by case basis. Property negotiations are carried out on a market value basis and market value is determined based on an appraisal report. Individual property requirements will be confirmed during the Preliminary Design Phase.</p> <p>The Ministry appreciated the opportunity to meet with you earlier this month to discuss the potential impacts of the preliminary design alternatives on your development. We look forward to your continued involvement in the study process.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the attention of: Brenda Jamieson and Charles Organ, After attending the Aug 15, 2012 meeting at the Wilmot Center to review the #7 Corridor plans, we have studied the photos and plans on your web site in greater detail. Given the 2 choices we think the Southern route for a bypass to Shakespeare offers the 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare and the detailed rationale why has been noted.</p> <p>During the 'Preliminary Planning' phase, consideration was given to a new corridor south of the existing railway corridor from west of New Hamburg to east of Stratford. This alternative was not preferred through a process of comparative evaluation, as detailed in</p>

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<p>safest, shortest, most logical and practical route for the traveling public and the Shakespeare community. We state our reasons below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Northern route would require the use of about 4 more kilometers of the existing Highway 7 from the western edge of Shakespeare to west of Rd 109 with all the existing accesses to houses, farms, and farm field entrances. Obviously less safe than the limited access provided by the Southern route over this same distance. 2. The Southern bypass is 1.18 kilometers shorter than the Northern route which translates into about a 15% shorter route thru Segments D & E. Considering the ever increasing price of fuel and the increasing time pressure of modern life, this 15% "cost" would be a disincentive for vehicles, especially trucks, to use a Northern route. 3. As a consequence, if the Northern route is chosen, there could quite likely be a large number of vehicles continue to use Pork St. To 59 and thru Shakespeare to the east or even Pork St., east of 59 when Perth East completes its policy of paving township roads. 4. The Northern route would not provide as welcoming an entrance to Shakespeare as would the Southern route. The businesses of the village depend to a great extent on visitors and tourists, most of them coming from the more populated area to the east, hence the current existing "Welcome Center" on the east entrance to the village. The Southern route would provide for the current eastern entrance to the village to remain. The Northern route would take traffic half way around the village where the entrance intersection (E4/E5) is almost halfway down a hill. With the village out of sight there is a likelihood that many travelers new to the area would continue on to Stratford to the detriment of Shakespeare businesses. 5. The Northern route intersection, E4/E5, by virtue of the topography would involve an uphill grade to the south ,east and west. Another disincentive especially for trucks to use the route. 6. The Northern route would displace a farm residence and al barn. This would be a severe and unnecessary event that would happen if the Northern route is chosen. 7. The Northern route would also displace or severely affect a significant commercial business, the Shakespeare Truck Center. 8. The Northern route would landlock more parcels of land than the Southern route (8 compared to 7 for the Southern route in your documentation). 9. As a general comment I must express our concern that the results of this extensive corridor study could be discounted on the basis of acres needed after such extensive academic and community input has been gathered weighed and evaluated. I for one have spent days of my life attending meetings, reading reports prepared by your experts, questioning your experts, answering surveys, etc. We understand the Perth East Council's concern for emergency response and we believe your study best addresses that issue. With all due respect to the arguments of the Perth East council's letter, the Southern route is still the better alternative. <p>Personal Comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There has been a noticeable increase in traffic on Highway #7 in recent years. 2. There is a major concern for the emergency response needed out of the Shakespeare Perth East facility and volunteers. 3. Neither bypass options provide a solution to Perth East Council's original request for relief. 4. The current request from the Perth East council for a North Bypass and the attempt to get other townships and Perth County to take a stand is a sign to us of pressure from groups such as the ABC group, and as such is their attempt to deflect criticism that they have done nothing. 5. Perth East Council is far from unanimous in its suggestion for a North bypass. I quote: "However, we have now got to the point where it appears that saving acres is more important than saving the farmers ability to farm without fighting traffic on Hwy 7&8. By using the 7&8 alignments anyone who farms property or a combination of properties on the north and/or south of 7&8 will be interacting with increased traffic as they try to move between properties – again an increased intrusion that they did not have before. To me it is more important to "save the farmer's ability to farm the acres", rather than "save the acres" as the north bypass and westerly line 7&8 and road 110 corridor is proposed to do." I would strongly suggest you read this letter in its entirety. It would be a major mistake to recommend a new corridor that is as extensive as either bypass proposals and still retains a nasty safety record which it was intended to fix. 6. This Corridor Study plan has been pressured by various stakeholders, with the best of intentions, into a shadow of a solution. There needs to be a renewed discussion of the cost of human life that will continue to be lost on a somewhat improved existing route versus the cost of acres lost. 7. As a response to Perth County and the townships we believe you should reconsider the need for expensive railway crossings and possible damage to the Fryfogel Tavern Heritage inherent in the proposed route, which local municipalities are rejecting, and review and reopen the only safe solution, a full new, divided, limited access south of the railroad from New Hamburg to Stratford. 8. As a resident of Shakespeare for over 40 years I cannot recall one traffic death in the village. However there have been numerous deaths on Highway 7 on either side of the village, very difficult and stressful events which our volunteer fire department have had 	<p>Report E, so it was not carried forward.</p> <p>Based on feedback received from stakeholders and the public, a new corridor south of the existing railway corridor was again reviewed in early 2010. The decision to not carry this alternative forward for further review was reconfirmed.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<p>to attend.</p> <p>9. If the option of using Pork St as a reliever road is not acceptable to the County of Perth and Perth East then it is time to review the full Corridor Study in the interests of safety and the cost of the required infrastructure.</p>	
<p>Highway 7&8 corridor comments / letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two basic assumptions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Perth County area will move forward in the future and require additional traffic capacity. 2. A new or upgraded road corridor will be built sometime. • Issues and comments surrounding the present highway 7 & 8 corridor: • Insufficient sight lines contribute to accidents between traffic already on the highway, as well as local residents entering and leaving the highway. • Current traffic volumes appear to be too high for safe ingress/egress actions of local residents and farm related equipment movement. • Current corridor appears to be seen as having too many disruptions to efficient traffic flow as evidenced by the number of vehicles bypassing 7&8 and using roads 29, 33, and 37. • There is a need for changes to be made to traffic patterns and/or corridor alignments. <p>Goals after construction of a highway corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The corridor will need to be efficient and interruption free so that it will be seen as a faster alternative to roads 29, 33, or 37. Traffic counts on these rural roads could then drop back down to expected 'township road' numbers. • After construction the routine daily lives of the residents of Perth East should be able to return as closely as possible to what exists now in the mixed resident rural community. There should be as few as possible future continuous disruptions after the corridor is completed. <p>Additional comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my view, rebuilding the existing highway 7&8 corridor (both east and west of Shakespeare) and possibly incorporating road 110 will not remedy all the existing issues or satisfy the listed goals that should be met. • Adding stop lights or roundabouts on 7&8 at the north/south roads will add more barriers to smooth efficient east/west travel. This could easily cause higher traffic levels on roads 29, 33, and 37 as these roads may appear to be even more efficient routes from the Stratford area to road 101 and the 4 lane highway. The past traffic volume and speed complaints submitted by Perth East residents living on roads 29, 33, & 37 need to be kept in mind when considering the future highway corridor. The new corridor needs to be positioned and constructed such that all traffic will want to use the new corridor rather than the township roads. • If the current 7&8 corridor is upgraded, and traffic flow needs increase in the future, and the traffic from the three township roads reroute to the upgraded corridor, the Perth East residents who currently live along 7&8 will be almost unable to make left turns into or out of their properties. This could require leaving their properties in one direction and returning from the other. • Right turns only will cause notable inconveniences to large agricultural operations as they attempt to move large farm machinery. It will negatively affect local farmers as they go about farming. • Routing the corridor down road 110 subjects three more barns, and another farmstead to continual traffic flow that they were not subjected to in the past. • The 7/8 and 110 routing will be an expanded continuous future intrusion into many residents' lives that they did not have before. • Regardless of where the new corridor goes, there are going to be some residents whose lives will have major intrusions, and some buildings will need to be moved or demolished. Using 7&8 from 101 to 110 as the future corridor alignment will not be without some disruptions happening on both sides of Shakespeare. We have not yet been told which buildings east of Shakespeare will be affected with the previous "south bypass" route. As you travel this area it appears that there are a number of situations where something will need to be removed. • When the consultants started their study it became obvious that they lacked knowledge of the value of agriculture in the area, and had limited knowledge of farming practices in Perth County. The response to this lack of knowledge was the formation of the ABC group who clearly itemized and explained the nuances of agriculture in Perth East and South Easthope in particular. The values of farm land and farming practices were highlighted. Their report also asked that minimal farming acres be incorporated into the new corridor. • It now appears that saving acres is more important than saving the farmers ability to farm without fighting traffic on Hwy 7&8. By using the current 7&8 corridor anyone who farms property or a combination of properties on the north and/or south of 7&8 will be interacting with increased traffic as they try to move between properties – an increased intrusion to what they had before. To me it is more important to "save the farmer's ability to farm the acres", rather than, "save the acres" as the north bypass, expanded highway 	<p>Your concerns regarding the safety and operations of the Preliminary Design Alternatives under considerations through Perth East and your thoughts on alternatives to address these concerns have been noted.</p> <p>During the 'Preliminary Planning' phase, consideration was given to a new corridor south of the existing railway corridor from west of New Hamburg to east of Stratford. This alternative was not preferred through a process of comparative evaluation, as detailed in Report E, so it was not carried forward.</p> <p>Based on feedback received from stakeholders and the public, a new corridor south of the existing railway corridor was again reviewed in early 2010. The decision to not carry this alternative forward for further review was reconfirmed.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including proposed mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>

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<p>7&8, and road 110 corridor is proposed to do.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I get the sense that the smaller land acreage owners are very concerned about saving acres, while the larger land acreage owners are more concerned about their ability to move large equipment to farm the remaining acres. If recent types of land transactions continue, it appears that in the future Perth East will have fewer landowner numbers, but each landowner will have larger land acreages. • The “south bypass” route will affect farmers who own land on both sides of the railroad and have private crossings. Many people have suggested this road construction may not happen for 5, or 10 years or longer. As farm land changes hands in that time frame, the future owners will be aware that with the “south bypass” there is going to be a north/south disruption. Future land purchases and transfers will be made that will eliminate the need for the current private rail road crossings. • The corridor route that could lend itself most easily to uninterrupted traffic flow, and the least future continual intrusions in Perth East’s mixed rural setting would be extending the current westerly portion of the “south bypass” all the way easterly along the south of the railroad and then on to 101. This will cause a very major upheaval to a very progressive farm on the east end. Beyond that it would appear that no buildings will need to be removed. • Future land transactions in the next five to fifteen years would also remove the need for private railway crossings as explained in the earlier comments about the suggested “south bypass”. • There would be no intrusions along 7&8 or road 110. 7& 8 should have safer driving because of decreased traffic. • There would need to be an interchange over 107 at Shakespeare with on, and off, lanes in both east and west directions as suggested by the “south bypass”. • All other north/south roads will require bridges over the roadway/ railway corridor to allow residents and farmers to move about unhindered, and to allow emergency services to be efficient. Emergency services access to the railroad would be readily possible right off of the north edge of the new highway corridor. • This route would not require any new bridges to be constructed under or over the railway. • This last suggested routing is the closest to meeting the goals of a new corridor as I see them: -efficient unobstructed corridor traffic flow, and, - least future intrusion into the lives of the mixed resident rural community of Perth East 	
<p>Further to the information presented at PIC #5 and upon review of the additional information, I provide my comments as follows, (as an interested party and future resident of Shakespeare), which support the South By-Pass route for the Highway 7& 8 Transportation Corridor between New Hamburg and Stratford.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With the North By-Pass route being longer in travel distance (than the South By-Pass route), there would be increased cost in terms of time and fuel for all travelling this corridor 2. Given the North By-Pass route requires use of the existing Highway 7&8 for several kilometers wherein there exists accesses to houses, farms, and farm fields, this route is prone to far greater number of accidents. 3. The North By-Pass route, restricts direct access into Shakespeare from the east and as such, is detrimental to the village by virtue of reduced business traffic. Shakespeare, by its nature for the most part is an impulse, unscheduled “drive-by, stop and browse” event rather than a destination stop. Shakespeare’s commerce will most certainly be impacted if the unscheduled travelers from the east by-pass the village. 4. From the additional information provided (segments D and E together), the North By-Pass route will displace a rural residence together with several barns. As well, the North By-Pass will land lock more parcels of land. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a personal note..... • I was raised in the village of Shakespeare and graduated from Sprucedale Public School. While Shakespeare is not my residence at this time, I will be retiring to the farms where my parents [REDACTED] have lived and owned for over 40 years [REDACTED] [REDACTED]). The two farms have been in the [REDACTED] family since 1832. • As a future resident of Shakespeare, not only would the North By-Pass route be a devastating option as it needlessly (please see ** below) divides farms in half, displaces a rural residence and several barns, but it stands to be the more dangerous option compared to the South By-Pass route. The fore mentioned coupled with the detrimental impact to Shakespeare’s business community at large without doubt, point to the South By-Pass route as the only choice! • The above all being said, I personally find it difficult to understand the Province’s lack of further examination and consideration of two other obvious options in this regard: • Expansion of the existing Highway 7&8 corridor from New Hamburg to Stratford to include 4 lanes with 3 lanes through the village of Shakespeare • Expansion to include a center turn lane through Shakespeare together with paving Pork St. East of 59 to the Perth/Oxford county line. • Thank you for your time and consideration. 	<p>Your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare and the rationale why has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After reading [redacted] input on this seemingly never ending story, I decided that I really must add the Perth County Historical Foundation's views. Letters to the local press have grown more and more negative as I'm sure you must be aware. What is truly amazing to me is yesterday's letter to the Beacon Herald [redacted] in which every point he raised was mentioned to you from the very beginning in 2009, but here we go again, Ever since the meeting in South Easthope on March 27, 2010 at which the route suggestions of the PCHF and the Shakespeare and Area Residents Association were summarily rejected – not even heard – we have felt that AECOM and MTO have no interest in what anyone but the Agricultural Business Community had to say. This made sense of a sort because the ABC's interests are worth millions, and this group is much better organized than our small groups. But the ABC's problems eventually ran up against your aims, and that is now your problem, again. • The route options that you now have simply do not make sense. The initial idea of promoting a route that is quicker and easier is now out of the window. The south diversion is thoroughly disliked by the ABC because of the farmland it consumes. The north route diversion around Shakespeare and the south route are both too long, too tortuous, and far too costly, and certainly won't save time for the average truck or car traveler. This north route has been heavily criticized by farmers to the north of the village – witness a letter in tonight's Beacon Herald. The necessary bridges and roundabouts on both the north and south proposals will slow the traveler's journey, not speed it up, so what is the point of continuing these studies, all of them expensive and not really needed? • The recommended maximum speed of 80 km/hr. (too fast? too slow?) isn't too popular especially when one considers how many bends are involved, and both proposed routes start off at the east end with the horrendously expensive railway bridge that you will have to build eventually no matter what happens. Lately I've been talking to New Hamburg residents and they are very unhappy about your plans at the further east end, and the arrogant way they claim to have been treated at meetings. • The original proposed highway upgrade got off to a good start back in 1971 leading as it did to the upgrading of Lorne Avenue. But that was that. The ABC people, at that time, got really organized and successfully fought the plan for the four lanes upgrading of Pork Street (Line 33) as detrimental to farm interests, helped by political infighting at the time. New Hamburg didn't like it either, and still don't. But, in retrospect, this was a good start at the time. The PCHF looked upon this as a sensible basis for a separate highway, but making it just two lanes by simply bringing Hwy 7/8 down the Town Line to link up with the improved Pork Street. Its cost would have been minimal compared to your various planned highways, not needing any bridges, not running Shakespeare, not threatening the existence of Perth County's oldest structure – the Fryfogel Inn – taking up little extra land (no roundabouts needed) and being a shorter route all told. But this plan was rejected by your experts out of hand. We were told at the South Easthope meeting that the new road had to be four lanes (at least), that building it got in the way of municipal planning (ask Mike Harris about the reality of that), and no ninety degree bends would be allowed, despite there being two ninety degree bends in your 2009 plan. Our disgust at this transparent logic should be understandable. That our rejected proposed route went by one of Wilmot Township and Perth County's biggest land owning farmers had little to do with its rejection, we've been told. • On the other hand, the best part of your latest plan is to improve line 32 (the western extension of Lorne Avenue), continuing the road to Avonwood and then up to Hwy 8, making a much better truck by-pass for Stratford. It's needed. This seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel. • Please hang in there. What you are trying to do is extraordinarily difficult. But no doubt you have your orders. The original blast through Shakespeare (but improving the junction here safety-wise) is the best of your own original highway plans, mais qui sait? The in-thinking among many of my friends and colleagues here in Stratford is that this highway will not be built for many years, if it gets built at all. Only the Shadow knows. 	<p>Your concerns with the preliminary design alternatives under consideration from east of Stratford to Regional Road 1 and the rationale why and your positive feedback regarding the alternatives under consideration west of Stratford have been noted.</p> <p>During the 'Preliminary Planning' phase, consideration was given to a new corridor south of the existing railway corridor from west of New Hamburg to east of Stratford. This alternative was not preferred through a process of comparative evaluation, as detailed in Report E, so it was not carried forward.</p> <p>Based on feedback received from stakeholders and the public, a new corridor south of the existing railway corridor was again reviewed in early 2010. The decision to not carry this alternative forward for further review was reconfirmed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please find attached our letter with our thoughts and input regarding the selection of a preferred route. Please take the time to read it; we hope you seriously take into consideration what we have to say. We have studied the information to great lengths and feel we have offered some valuable advice. • We were told you want public/property owners input on your 7&8 study, and to get our letters in that they would most definitely be read, well here are our thoughts on the subject, we sincerely hope you take the time to not only read our entire letter but really listen to what we are saying and also remember to use some common sense when making your decision. I have tried to approach this letter with my head and not my heart and have found that my heads wellbeing is directly affected by what's in my heart..... • We believe you had good guidelines for the criteria for evaluation of your study with all the most important issues for a reason. These issues were all addressed and answered, determining that if a bypass is to be decided upon the facts from your study determine the south option as the best choice. If this decision is now changed to the north option we definitely feel that there will be regret in the future if and when the time comes to go ahead with it, as it just isn't the most logical choice now and never will be. • We still stand behind the idea that a bypass around Shakespeare is not the best choice for now or the future needs of this area. The MTO would be smart to go back to the idea of sticking with the existing 7&8 highway, widen it to 4 lanes both east and west of the village if you think there's going to be a need to accommodate traffic, narrow it to 3-4 lanes and lowered speed limit thru the village. We know that there is concern with being bottlenecked and backed up but honestly watching the traffic on a day to day basis for the past seven years we don't think that it would be as bad as you are predicting. If anything there is less traffic now then there was then 	<p>Your preference for expansion of the existing Highway 7&8 corridor rather than a bypass of Shakespeare has been noted. Further, your preference for a south bypass of Shakespeare rather than a north bypass should a bypass be required and the detailed rationale why have been noted, including potential impacts to agricultural operations, businesses and the natural environment, less direct traffic routing and restricted access to Shakespeare.</p> <p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as widening Highway 7&8 east and west of Shakespeare, widening Highway 7&8 to three or four lane through Shakespeare and / or expansion of parallel corridors, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<p>because many people are already using Pork St. which with continued upgrading and signage would be very useable as a truck route from New Hamburg into the south end of Stratford. A centre turning lane and advanced green in the village would definitely help. With living on the western edge of Shakespeare, we observe that the only time there is back up on the highway is during Festival season occasionally on Sunday evenings between 5-6 pm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expense involved for a bypass would be outrageous and the fact that it likely won't happen in the next 20 years solves nothing for the near future. In the meantime we wait for this magic number for predicted traffic volume which may never be reached and have this "study decision" hanging over our heads. Why not work with the existing roads, which would be more realistic to budget for and solve many of the traffic concerns. Is it not possible for the county and the ministry to work together to come up with a solution and do some budgeting together to upgrade existing roads to accommodate traffic. There has got to be a solution to be able to work with the existing 7&8, it just seems to be an unforgivable sin to cut across farmland and destroy homes and properties when it is not necessary. The cost involved to buy up these farms/land would be atrocious compared to the cost of purchasing a few of the properties/frontage of the houses needed in the village. Several of the houses that would be affected are quite run down and are rental units where people come and go. The only home I can think of that is second generation is where a garage was and it already has a for sale sign on it. There is not one newly constructed home of any value along this stretch. I hate to sound like a snob, which I am not, but when you look at the houses that would be lost in the village and the cost to purchase/expropriate them, it doesn't come close to compare to the cost of one, one hundred acre farm let alone several in today's market. It just doesn't make any sense, no matter how you look at it to plan to expropriate and destroy the rural properties by a province already in debt (which probably isn't going to change anytime soon) which has no budget for the project. Even if I didn't live in this area, I would look at this dilemma and say " why wouldn't you just work with the existing roads and come up with a solution that is feasible (both cost and practically). This is a farming, rural community, our farms and farmers are here to stay generation after generation unless you (MTO) destroys or takes them from us, even a natural disaster doesn't usually beat a farmer, they pick up the pieces and start again. • We need to stop and ask ourselves, why do we need this big 400 type route anyways? If it's to get to Stratford in a hurry?, well, industry seems to be going rather than coming to Stratford of late. If it's for the tourist traffic I would like to share with you that we have had hundreds of Toronto area people stopping at our "farm gate vegetable stand" over the last several years(many repeat visitors year after year) on their way to and from the festival. The majority of them look so forward to leisurely taking this drive from New Hamburg to Stratford and enjoy taking in what there is to offer along the way. We have done our own little study and believe me, majority of them are not in a hurry when they make this drive. We have shared in depth details of this bypass planning with many of them and they have agreed with us that a bypass would not be their preferred solution either. We have been asked over and over why a bypass, to which we have not been able to give them a sensible explanation. • Many of these tourists stop to chat, asking questions about our land and crops. It is very rewarding to be able to share and educate the "big city" people on our rural life. Many of them are fascinated with our farming lifestyle, taking pictures of their family members along with our unique home, our crops and even our livestock/pets, which we don't mind because we are proud to share our knowledge and heritage of our roots in Perth East. • If the MTO is determined to build a bypass around Shakespeare then it is obvious that the south option is the better of the two. The south bypass follows the municipal drain, which makes sense. It may use 40 acres more than the north but there is less impact on farm properties and homes, the impact is minimal to farm properties and it makes total sense to stick close to the railway line affecting minimal land loss along the back edge of farms. This whole stretch would have 0 access from existing driveways which is what I thought was trying to be accomplished. There are less farms divided with the south bypass. It doesn't wipe out as many homes or businesses. Perhaps there could be even more "tweaking" to the route and input from the land owners to minimize impact even more. No one should lose access to their home over this. It makes a lot more sense to keep the traffic to the south of the village and closer to Tavistock, crossing the 59 on level ground compared to crossing 107 to the north in a valley and more out of the way for locals. • The North bypass may use less acreage but it negatively impacts the natural environment. It wipes out a thriving family business(Shakespeare truck center), several homes, complete properties being declared "inaccessible" cutting whole farms into pieces of non-accessible property. That is just wrong! • The fact that the MTO purchased the land between Stratford and Shakespeare in the 60's with the thought of widening that stretch of highway really should NOT be a deciding factor now to make the wrong decision when choosing a bypass. That land is also fertile farm land (I wonder how many acres in total?) and could be offered to be sold back to the farms,(moneys could then go towards the south bypass project) to defer cost of purchasing the 40 extra acres to the south. Perhaps the ministry made a mistake at that time by purchasing that land and it would be very sad if another mistake were made at this time, two wrongs don't make a right! I believe another mistake would be made by choosing a north bypass as the preferred route (just because they already own that land) when the facts from your study along with common sense point to a south bypass being the lesser of two evils. (if a bypass is the answer??) 	<p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When that land was purchased I believe the thought was to expand that stretch of highway and continue straight thru Shakespeare as it is. With upgrades to Pork St. and proper signage this still makes more sense and would work. I believe Shakespeare has a better chance of survival with a reasonable straight thru rather than a bypass. • Building a north bypass defeats the purpose of getting traffic to the south end of Stratford quicker; going 1.8 km out of the way to the north is ridiculous. Who in their right mind takes a longer route to get somewhere faster? A north bypass would NOT offer limited access between Shakespeare and rd 109 because of the existing farm and home entrances along that stretch. The “previously chosen” south bypass would offer a much safer limited access route along the same distance. • A north bypass would NOT allow traffic from the GTA to enter into Shakespeare directly, causing them to have to follow the bypass and get onto rd. 107 to get to Shakespeare, not likely going to appeal to very many visitors on their way to Stratford, therefore bypassing the village altogether, which will directly affect the survival of all businesses in the village eg. Gas, motel, restaurant, antiques, lumber yard, local farm gate growers, and of course the “new welcome center” which would be missed altogether! The north bypass option just has too many major negative impacts on Shakespeare’s survival and the affect on properties, environment and safety to the north to even be considered. Both bypasses end up at the south end of Stratford which clearly tells us that is what you have set out to accomplish, so why in God’s name would it even be considered to send the traffic further out of the way on a permanent “detour” to the north? • It has come to our attention that many village residents who may have originally thought a north bypass looked ok on paper had no idea of the fact that there would be no access into the village from the east and now think it is a bad idea. In private conversation they acknowledge that they would have been all for 3-4 lanes thru the village and now agree (after learning the facts) that if there’s to be a bypass they would prefer one to the south, but for whatever their reasons they chose not to take the time to voice their opinion to you, so on their behalf, for what it’s worth, I pass that on to you. • The South bypass WOULD allow visitors/traffic from GTA/Kitchener to enter into Shakespeare on their way into Stratford where they could visit the visitor welcome center, get information and leisurely take in what Shakespeare has to offer. Most tourists and visitors make their stops on their way TO their destination NOT on their way home at the end of the day when they are tired, shops are closed or possibly its dark and they just want to get home. • A north bypass over hills and valleys in our opinion becomes a safety factor with roundabouts/stop lights part way up a hill as well as the extra fuel consumption especially for trucks, also causing extra unnecessary pollution as the trucks manoeuvre up and down the hills. I would be interested to know if the truckers may then look for their own alternate route to avoid this northern bypass which would take them back over to using Pork Street or Sebastopol rd from Stratford to New Hamburg. • Perhaps a better solution would be to go back to the original idea of 4 lanes on either side of Shakespeare with 3-4 lanes and lower speed limit through the village. If it’s all about speed, I would be curious to know what the difference in the timing for traffic to travel the distance would be by taking a north bypass(1.8 k longer) at 90 km per hour for the longer distance up and over hills(winter snow and ice) thru a roundabout or stop lights versus 50 km per hour, through a stop light for the short distance on level highway from one edge of the village to the other. My guess would be that the trucks would save time, fuel and cause less pollution by slowing down and going straight through the village. So what if there are periods of backup in traffic, that happens at times no matter where you go. In this new age of “environmentally friendly” it doesn’t make sense to choose a north bypass whatsoever. If going through the village with 3-4 lanes is definitely off the table then it makes even more sense to go back to the south bypass which also saves time, distance, fuel and is a safer and much more environmentally friendly alternative on LEVEL ground and is more direct for the trucks coming and going out of the south end of Stratford. • Has it ever been considered to build a two lane instead of 4 lanes south bypass around the village? The 7&8 could then be left as it is thru the village , expand 7&8 to 4 lanes on either side of the village as planned. The advantages to this would be that the locals and the tourist traffic would have the choice to stay on the highway going in both directions thru the village. This would reduce the truck traffic and with proper signage they would be more inclined to use the bypass to get to the south end of Stratford which in turn would be a win /win situation as it would split the traffic, making it safer thru Shakespeare as well as safer on the rural stretch to the west and east of Shakespeare for farm vehicles and access from laneways. This would also allow the use of the land along the 7&8 that was purchased years ago for the expansion. This plan would still give us the “necessary” amount of lanes in either direction for the “predicted” need for a four lane highway, leaving NO deficit for traffic flow in both directions. A two lane south by-pass would take up even less of the valuable farm land and be more cost efficient. It still makes far more sense to stick with the south bypass along the tracks as chosen. No matter how you look at this, IF a bypass is going to be the solution to the “predicted volume of traffic” the right choice was made when it was announced that the south option was the preferred route, which the criteria for evaluation from your study supports. • On a personal level, with all the talk in the news lately about bullying, this, in our opinion would be a very unacceptable clear cut case of bullying, bullying people right out of their homes and taking away not only their homes and property but their livelihood as well, its disgraceful! We have all been made aware of the tragic consequences and regret that bullying can cause. We all set goals 	

Comments	MTO Response
<p>for our future and work hard to achieve them, minding our own business along the way, and its pretty sad that we stand to lose all of what we have worked so hard to achieve because of some unnecessary plan for the future for whom and for what??</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it to accommodate traffic flow that may never happen? Is it to accommodate Industry in Stratford which seems to be leaving the city lately more often than coming? Is it to accommodate the tourists who have the leisure time and money to come and go to the festival? Is it to appease the Mayor of Stratford? Is it to “shave” 5 minutes off the driving time between Stratford and New Hamburg? • Maybe the direction of this study needs to be shifted to accommodate the real needs of our local rural community, What about the safety and wellbeing of our farmers, who provide our food, what about the “buy local” theme, pretty hard to achieve when farm gate sales are lost because you’re not only going to be taking away our farm gate, you want to take away our home, our land, our life and our livelihood... welcome to rural Perth East!! • We are MORE than just a dot on the map. We don’t want “fair market value” for our homes, we want the choice to continue living in our homes and our properties left intact. We don’t want the uncertainty of this highway hanging over our heads, we have enough stress in our lives. We want the choice of selling our property if and when we are ready to do so. Yes, we’ve been told this bypass may never happen in our lifetime but that means nothing to us. • I could go on and on about why we don’t want to lose our home as it is but to sum it up, we had a dream, we set goals, we worked hard, we made compromises. We respect the environment, we built our home recycling and reusing material from the original home that was here, we pay our taxes, we are law abiding citizens, we are community oriented people, we are self-employed, we rely on the income our land generates for us, we have no “big pension” to see us through. We raised a family with hopes that someday our dream home would stay in the family for generations and be taken over by one of our children. Do we tell our kids to follow their dreams and work towards a goal or do we tell them to give up. The plan of having a north bypass constructed across our doorstep defeats everything we have worked so hard for over the last 25 years. • When preparing to build our new home, we too had a vision and a budget; we looked around and saw what we already had. With some serious thought, lots of time, hard work, some compromises and a budget we “reworked” the existing supplies at hand. We worked together (our family) and were able to create a very safe, “built to last” home of fieldstone with an interior made up of mostly refurbished wood from the pre-existing buildings. Our home is very practical, nothing fancy but it serves the purpose well for us now and for future needs. We worked within our budget. Many people have commended us on our project and been impressed with the finished results. • Perhaps a lesson could be learned from our experience, sometimes it pays to work with what we already have, (pork rd. & the existing 7&8) set a budget, make some compromises and work together (County & MTO) to build a safe, practical, built to last solution for the future. Expand the existing 7&8 as once planned and have the county commit to continue to upgrade Pork St. from 59 to New Hamburg as a truck route. Win/win. • In Conclusion, regardless of what we have to say, after studying over and over and over again the criteria for evaluation used in depth for this study the facts clearly show that there are more pros supporting the south option than there are for the north option. We would then have to ask ourselves why, when so much time, thought and money has gone into this study and a decision was already made supporting the south bypass are we still studying it?? The important issues of criteria have been studied and answered showing that the facts support the choice that was made, that being a bypass along the tracks to the south of the village. If this decision is suddenly reversed then it would appear that the MTO has also been “bullied” into making a change that they know darn well is wrong! Although we still believe your original route of going thru the village would be the best option and you were bullied into changing that. Are you prepared to give in and give up another “chosen preferred route” to settle for a north bypass which originally wasn’t even a proposed option? We would suggest that if a by-pass needs to be chosen, the MTO takes a stand and sticks with their previous decision and go with the south option or go back to their first choice of going straight through the village on the existing 7&8, if they are swayed or bullied into changing the decision again, then this study has all been in vain. • Also on behalf of many extended family members and friends who support us and have shared their input on the information from your study. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As per the Public Information Centre #5 meeting held Wednesday August 15, 2012 we, the residents of [REDACTED], have raised a petition to address our concerns with your proposed changes which we believe would negatively affect our community. • Attached is a copy of the Petition and signatures (426) from the residents of [REDACTED]. The original petition and signatures were sent to Bob Chiarelli, Ontario Minister of Transport, with copies to the Les Armstrong, Mayor of Wilmot Township, Mark Murray and Jeff Gerber, Councillors, Ward 4, Wilmot Township, Ken Seiling, Regional Chair, Waterloo Region Council and Michael Harris, MPP, Kitchener-Conestoga. • In developing your final position regarding the proposed changes to the Peel Street/Haysville Road intersection, we would appreciate if you would take our concerns under advisement and provide us with your feedback. Owners Request From Petition • Since no clearly demonstrated case had been made by MTO, the Government of Ontario leave the intersection at Peel 	<p>This section of Highway 7&8 through New Hamburg, developed as a 2-lane arterial bypass in 1957, is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities and supporting economic prosperity across Ontario. The highway has experienced steady growth in traffic volumes resulting in the need to widen the highway to four lanes in 1988. The task of managing a sustainable provincial highway network includes planning for the future. In recent years, two independent studies have concluded that growth in this corridor will continue. Therefore, the ministry is undertaking planning and considering highway capacity and safety needs over the next 30 years to ensure future highway expansion opportunities are not precluded.</p> <p>Municipal planning forecasts indicate that the population in New Hamburg and Baden is expected to almost triple by 2031. The Increased population and employment for the Region of Waterloo, designated by the Growth Plan with input from the municipalities, will have a strong influence on the nature of travel demands between South/Central Ontario, including the entire study area, and this emerging growth area. The Region of Waterloo will continue to act as a hub for employment and services to outlying</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<p>Street/Haysville Road in its current state.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given that our government ministries support the health of all Ontarians, we would recommend that MTO consider constructing a pedestrian overpass at this intersection. The Ontario Ministry of Transport install a sign and light on Highway 7 & 8 immediately east of Walker Road that will indicate that vehicles should be prepared to stop for a red light at the intersection of Peel Street/Haysville Road when the light is flashing. The light would operate in the same manner as the light at the Nafziger Road and Highway 7 & 8 intersection 	<p>communities in this part of Ontario. Given the long-term vision for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and the influence it will have on the outlying transportation systems that feed into the area, the Ministry is confident that traffic volumes in the study area will continue to increase at rates that will require capacity and operational expansions to Highway 7&8 within the 30 year planning timeframe.</p> <p>Your preference for Alternative G1 (i.e. retention of signalized intersections at Peel/Haysville) has been noted. The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>Alternative G2 (i.e. interchange at Peel/Haysville) includes a bridge over Highway 7&8 at the Peel Street / Haysville Road intersection which pedestrians would use to cross the highway. For Alternative G1, pedestrian crossing signs will continue to be provided at the intersection. In both cases, the existing pedestrian crossing under the Nith River bridge to the east of the intersection will be retained.</p> <p>Your request for a “be prepared to stop when signals flashing” sign on the west approach to the Peel Street intersection has been reviewed by the Ministry’s Traffic Section. When reviewing the need for this type of warning sign, the Ministry of Transportation considers a number of factors including traffic operations, collision history, available sight distance, and human factors. The results of the Ministry’s review did not support the need for this type of improvement.</p> <p>The Ministry recently undertook improvements to the traffic signal timing aimed at improving the overall traffic operation and safety at this intersection. Other safety measures currently in place are an eastbound Traffic Signal Ahead sign with a continuous flashing beacon and advanced loop detectors. The signs warn eastbound motorists that they are approaching a set of traffic signals and the loop detectors provide additional green time to motorists approaching the intersection.</p> <p>The Ministry will continue to monitor traffic operations at this location to determine the need for further improvements.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I studied Geography (and Env. Studies) & Geomatics at Wilfrid Laurier University. I have been a resident of Perth County for the majority of my life and thus care a great deal about the restructuring of Hwy. 7/8 west of Stratford. If I may post a possible solution, why not consider including passing lanes every few kilometers or so instead of redirecting the entire road. On many of the highways going up north there are simple diverts where, for a hundred metres or so, there is a passing lane included so as to improve the flow of traffic and prevent accidents. Please do not redirect the highway or add another 2 lanes over this sensitive landscape – it is very important to us. 	<p>Your preference for Highway 7&8 to remain a 2 lane highway on its current alignment has been noted.</p> <p>During the ‘Transportation Planning’ phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as passing lanes east and west of Shakespeare, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network and interference with the “downtown / historic crossroads” function of Shakespeare). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a resident and small business owner of New Hamburg I am writing to voice my extreme displeasure with the proposed widening of HWY 7/8. This is a complete waste of public tax payer money and is completely unnecessary for the many reasons outlined in the recent letter you received from the New Hamburg Board of Trade and The ABC. I have never, not once, seen a traffic buildup on this route. The damage that will be done to the town of Shakespeare and New Hamburg simply isn’t worth saving someone 1-2 minutes on their drive. I will also be writing to my MPP and MP to voice my concern with them as well. Please add my name and email to the study contact list. 	<p>Your extreme displeasure with the proposed widening of Highway 7&8 is noted.</p> <p>Highway 7&8 is a regionally significant part of the overall provincial highway network. It plays a key role in linking communities in south-western Ontario and supports economic prosperity across Ontario.</p> <p>During the ‘Transportation Planning’ phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as passing lanes east and west of Shakespeare, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network and interference with the “downtown / historic crossroads” function of Shakespeare). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p> <p>The 2031 forecasted traffic volumes have assumed that all reasonable modes of travel and demand management such as ridesharing, telecommuting, optimizing passenger / freight rail capacity and increased inter-regional transit services are already implemented and operating to their fullest potential.</p> <p>As requested, we have added you name and email to the study contact list.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Perth County Federation of Agriculture (PCFA) works in an advocacy role on behalf of the 1700 farm business members who live in Perth County. 	<p>Your concerns regarding the potential impacts of the Preliminary Design Alternatives on the agricultural community and the study process have been noted.</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have reviewed responses to our last submissions and have reviewed information presented at the PIC #5 held July 2012, and wish to submit the following comments: • The Information at PIC#5 presented an alternate route north of Shakespeare and incorporating the existing Highway 7&8 west of Shakespeare, and along Road 110. It seems there are two routes now on the table for debate, this new proposal, and the previously selected South By-Pass Route. • Farmland Loss/Fragmentation: Regardless of route option or intersection options, it has been difficult to fully ascertain an accurate assessment of agricultural land taken out of production or how many parcels of farmland will become severed / landlocked. Knowing these numbers is crucial if the full impact of the options is to be evaluated. Questioning of staff did not provide clear or concise estimates of farmland loss or parcels that will be severed or landlocked. • Subsequent investigation of information on the website, and reporting from other sources now indicate an estimate of farmland loss, farm fragmentation, and landlocked parcels. Regardless of the route options for review, the brunt of the cumulative impact is being shouldered by agriculture. Couple this with no indication of when this project may get off the ground, or if it ever will, has left many in the farm community frustrated to say the least. • We have raised concerns around various farm business infrastructure issues in previous submissions. We recognize that significant changes have been made and recognized by the MTO regarding the criteria and factors to evaluate farm activity within the study area. This is appreciated and a great first step. We do have a concern however that a true and full recognition of the impacts around farm business unit access across the study area, the Nutrient Management Act requirements, and Drainage needs, have been met with a reluctant acceptance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Farm Business Unit Access: At PIC#5 a plethora of intersection options were presented for side road access to and across the Highway. The current North-South cross road infrastructure (# and location) is crucial for farming operations within the greater study area to operate effectively and efficiently. Reducing any of these current access routes, both across the current highway and onto the current highway, is not an acceptable option. b) Nutrient Management: Farmers that have significant amounts of land lost will find it very difficult to purchase lands to remain compliant with Nutrient Management Plans. Suggesting that compensation for this loss implicated with Nutrient Management needs, may be an acceptable solution from the standpoint of the Province, but it means a step backwards for a progressive farming operation. c) Drainage: Drainage infrastructure assurances that all will be dealt with, does not leave us with any level of comfort – a “trust us, we will look after it” approach has not always happened with other large road work projects since the objectives of farmland drainage and roadway drainage are not always in step with each other. Although drainage legislation may be a route to seek corrections after the fact, the time/energy and cost of farmers having to pursue such action is not an acceptable approach. • These parameters – Farm Business Unit Access, Nutrient Management, and Drainage – are not solely a factor of the farms directly on the route options. Farm businesses within the whole area are impacted and we still feel there has not been a true recognition of this in the materials presented to date by the Ministry or consultants. In your last reply, it was indicated that “it must be recognised that the transportation policies of the province require corridors to be identified and protected to meet current and projected needs” – it is our opinion that the province also has a responsibility to protect the current and projected needs of a viable agricultural sector. For the options currently on the table, a complete and comprehensive review of the individual impact of these parameters on the individual farm operations in the study area is needed in order for MTO and consultants to truly understand their importance weighed against the route/intersection options presented. • Study Process: The process has been designed to wear the community down which gradually lessens stakeholder involvement. Frustration with going forward through a process where original concerns and questions have not always been addressed seems to be a deliberate approach to dissuade participation rather than encourage it. Where original concerns raised within our previous submissions comes back with a response for justification from a Provincial standpoint but rarely a correction. In speaking to other individuals and groups who have made submissions, this seems to be a common occurrence. We still have concerns about the very basis of where the whole process began – population projections and future needs ; traffic counts ; review of current use of arterial roads in the region ; recognition of where agriculture fits into the scheme of the Provincial Policy Statement ; a complete and concise impact on agricultural operations in the study area. All of these issues, and the many more that other groups and individuals place before the study team, may be received and reviewed, but seem to be trumped by the desire to “get to the finish line”. <p>In Summary,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regardless of the route options for review, the brunt of the cumulative impact is being shouldered by agriculture and we find this unacceptable. - Reducing any of the current access routes from side roads, both across the current highway and onto the current highway, is not an acceptable option. - For the options currently on the table, a complete and comprehensive review of the individual impact on the individual farm 	<p>The range of Preliminary Design Alternatives presented at PIC #5 for public review and comment took into consideration network connectivity to and across the Highway 7&8 corridor, emergency service requirements, the movement of agricultural equipment as well as factors related to traffic demands, safety and mobility.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including proposed mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p> <p>The study team appreciates the input received from the agricultural community regarding existing farm businesses within the Analysis Area. As the study progresses, the study team will continue to liaise with agricultural landowners to ensure more detailed information is available to support preliminary design activities. We will consult with the owners of farm properties impacted by the preferred route and with representatives of OMAFRA’s Nutrient Management and Environmental Branch to ensure that the implications to nutrient management can be properly considered and addressed and to support preliminary design activities. Furthermore, the study team will systematically contact all relevant landowners along the preferred route to identify both public and private drains to support design work in subsequent design phases.</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<p>operations in the entire study area is needed in order for MTO and consultants to truly understand their importance weighed against the route/intersection options presented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As I once again take my time to input my personal thoughts and feelings regarding the proposed highway expansion through the area, I find myself at the same point as when I first learned about this in July of 2009. Taking into account all of the data, the delays, the consultations, speaking with neighbors, politicians, former and current MTO staff, affected landowners and my practical based intuition, all of it tells me that if a highway expansion was constructed it should be a limited access highway well South of the existing highway from Wilmont directly to the Southerly end of Stratford at Packham/Dunn rd. No doubt in my mind. The technical reasons why this route was not carried forward are not clear to me. Why wasn't the bottom land in Wilmont at the boundary line not studied? It appears the existing road network in that area was the focus and not a direct route. One small example of many inconsistencies. I don't think there is any constructive comments I could make on the contents of the study anymore, it plainly takes too much effort. My desire would be to build a truly safe and efficient road if constructed. Simple. I would want this road to be a limited access road that would not affect the local traffic in any significant way during and after construction. This road would only have three connection points, 1.Wilmont Perth Boundary, 2. County rd 107 and the provincial highway at the Southern end of Stratford. Since above route will not be revisited, I see no reason to debate the data anymore at a personal level as any other final result is less than acceptable. The goal itself is a good one. Safe, efficient flow and the study team has done an outstanding job of accommodating all of the interests. Too good of a job. For example, Shakespeare businesses will survive and most likely thrive if the road is not within sight of the church steeple. They will still be on the tourist route to the festival theatre minus the truck traffic. The "Agricultural community" will lose no matter where an expansion lands, its just comes down to who loses. Are we concerned with affecting the business of agriculture (land lost) at the expense of losing the ability to farm efficiently due to poor route planning (access issues of current route). The only conclusion that is for certain, is expansion through the village of Shakespeare would be devastating for safety. Thankfully that's off the table. A northern bypass as recently suggested is so unappealing it boggles my mind that there could be a desire for its rebirth. The newest proposals are hard to look at on a map and do not scream safety or efficiency (compared to limited access route). I do not wish to diminish the hard work in so many areas that has gone into this by the study team, the original concept just isn't valid. The one thing that is quite apparent when looking at a document like this is, this is a laundry list of all of the bad things that will happen if we do this. Not a rosy outlook especially when the residents where the expansion lies will have minimal benefit and maximum impact. Finally and surely, the political will for this project is lost (2/3rds at least). Extension and delay has made this process an expensive distraction for many and in many ways. It needs to be finalized or discontinued with provision put in place it will not be looked at so whimsically again. I appreciate the time you have taken to read this and hope your group finds some use in it. 	<p>During the 'Preliminary Planning' phase, consideration was given to a new corridor south of the existing railway corridor from west of New Hamburg to east of Stratford. This alternative was not preferred through a process of comparative evaluation, as detailed in Report E, so it was not carried forward.</p> <p>Based on feedback received from stakeholders and the public, a new corridor south of the existing railway corridor was again reviewed in early 2010. The decision to not carry this alternative forward for further review was reconfirmed.</p> <p>Your concerns regarding the Shakespeare area preliminary design alternatives have been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including proposed mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<p>Segment D / Crossing Road 111 and Perth Line 33</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the intersection treatment of Crossing Road 111 and Perth Line 33 we advocate a signalized intersection (an intelligent camera controlled traffic light) shown as D1 on page 20 and D3 on page 21 of PIC #5 information boards. This treatment would then continue the already established pattern of traffic behaviour for our local and farm population as well as outsider traffic. As in the past, and presently, this intersection works extremely well with only stop signs. A roundabout should not be implemented at the intersection because roundabouts are a source of confusion to many drivers which then result in collisions often causing deaths, injuries and delays. These observations are very evident in the established roundabouts of Kitchener-Waterloo. More land would be required as opposed to a signalized intersection; thus further impacting existing businesses and homes. Our farm population, using the roads daily with the enormous farm equipment, would be impeded trying to manoeuver a roundabout. In addition, with all the daily transport traffic, a roundabout would only create confusion and collisions which over many, many years have been almost non-existent at the intersection of Road 111 and Perth Line 33. PLEASE – NO ROUNDABOUT!!! <p>North Bypass of Shakespeare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The north bypass of Shakespeare is the preferred route. The formerly acquired right-of-way on Highway 7&8 will be utilized as intended; thus requiring much less productive farmland and fewer obstructions to farming operations. 	<p>Your preference for signalization of the Perth Line 33 / Road 111 intersection and your concerns regarding roundabouts has been noted. The roundabout alternatives under consideration have been designed to accommodate larger trucks and farm equipment.</p> <p>In addition, we have also noted your preference for the north bypass of Shakespeare and the rationale why.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<p>• With the increased traffic on Line 33, new traffic counts should be done on both Highway 7&8 and Line 33.</p> <p>Email Oct 30 9.26 pm</p> <p>• As a new home owner [REDACTED] of the village, I am concerned about the negative impact a northern route around Shakespeare would have on the value of my property. I believe alternative options such as upgrading Pork Road have not been properly assessed. Perth East Council, therefore, should be more involved overall with planning and providing alternatives.</p> <p>Email Oct 30 9.41 pm</p> <p>• I would like to echo the points made in this letter to the Beacon Herald.</p> <p>Re: "County to Take Highway Stand" The Beacon Herald Oct. 19, 2012</p> <p>The grand vision at the beginning of this Highway 7/8 Corridor Study of several years ago has shrunk from a completely limited access new highway to a much less and perhaps longer route.</p> <p>It is time to recognize the deficiencies of the Study Group's 2 current bypass plans and the county should take a stand.</p> <p>Over 20 years ago the county, with the financial help of the province, upgraded Pork Street from Stratford to Highway 59. This became a good, well-used "reliever road".</p> <p>The county should renew and extend its earlier vision and negotiate an alternative to the Highway 7/8 Corridor Study Group's proposals that would provide for the county to finish the "reliever road" concept from Highway 59 to Punkeydoodle Corners. This should include safety upgrades to the existing Pork Street and Highway 7 such as turn lanes at intersections and through Shakespeare, and wider shoulders for farm and emergency access. The advantages of that approach would:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce traffic on Highway 7/8, 2. Avoid the "irresponsible" destruction of 160 to 200 acres of farmland, 3. Save the multimillion dollar cost of two railway overpasses, 4. make a safer route achieving the safety concerns that helped initiate the present study and, 5. be a less costly solution that could realistically be put in an upcoming provincial budget. <p>A centre turn lane added to the present Highway 7/8 through Shakespeare would eliminate the only bottleneck and would improve the safer flow of traffic thru Shakespeare as well.</p> <p>Both the proposed southern bypass route, suggested by the Highway 7/8 Corridor Study Group, and the north bypass are both prohibitively expensive and have no chance of being built in the foreseeable future because of provincial priorities (and debt). The north bypass has even less chance, being 1.18 kilometers longer.</p> <p>Whereas a county homegrown reliever road (Pork Street) and upgrades (to Highway 7/8) proposal supported by the townships might have a chance to make the provincial budget in our lifetime while meeting concerns of safety, access, traffic flow and environmental impact.</p>	<p>Your concerns regarding the potential impacts to your property associated with a north bypass of Shakespeare have been noted.</p> <p>During the 'Transportation Planning' phase of the study, the existing road network in the broader study area was assessed to determine travel patterns, the functional use of the area road network, and current and forecasted capacity deficiencies. The study then tested various network improvement alternatives, including the use of municipal roads to determine if local road improvements would address the identified problems and opportunities.</p> <p>Alternatives, such as improvement to Pork Road or the provision of a centre left turn lane through Shakespeare, did not address the identified transportation problems and opportunities (i.e. a road capacity deficiency of 1 lane in each direction by 2031 in the area road network and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Shakespeare). Therefore, these alternatives were not carried forward.</p> <p>Pork Road will not be further reviewed as a potential alternative for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity and safety concerns associated with the existing 2-lane highway would not be addressed for the 2031 planning horizon. As a result, the Pork Road alternative would not successfully meet EA requirements with respect to addressing study problems and opportunities; • Pork Road is not constructed to stand the wear and tear associated with the forecast traffic volumes; • It is not appropriate to direct inter-regional traffic from a provincial highway to a local municipal road, and thereby change the role and function of that municipal road without converting/uploading it to become a provincial highway.
<p><u>Land Loss Resulting from Various Design Options</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agriculture Business Community (ABC) will not budge from its long stated position that the minimization of farmland loss and the preservation of Class 1 and 2 agricultural land, in this specific study area, must be the paramount priority governing all other considerations. • We believe that food land in this part of Ontario must always have higher priority than asphalt and tourist convenience. • The data compiled in Table 1.1 demonstrates the direct land loss and other impacts of each of the eight segments of the planned highway expansion. • It is important to note that ABC has serious issues with the way the land loss impacts were calculated by the consultants. Our objections, particularly in regard to the definitions of 'agricultural properties' used in their calculations are detailed in Annex 1 – Farm Definitions. • Readers must be cautioned that these calculations are at best 'rules of thumb'. However, this data, while flawed, is all that is currently available, and should at minimum allow us to make certain rough comparisons between design options. It is important to understand that these low estimated figures do not include the additional agricultural land that will be taken for the development of overpasses, underpasses, ramps, etc. The community has not been presented with an accurate estimate of the land to be taken for highway development. • Table 1.1 details the displacement of farm residences, farm buildings and agricultural land required as well as potential severances of farm property, and road closures. The level of detail offered applies to all segments of the planned corridor, including the two by-pass options, and to specific road design options within each segment. • The average losses across each section's design alternatives will be discussed. Averages are used as there are often only small variations in the figures. This allows us to see, in aggregate, the potential losses. The contentious parts of the current plan of highway development cluster on sections D and E. • If a northern by-pass route around Shakespeare were followed and if it entails a link to Lorne Ave. Down parts of road 110, then 74.3 hectares of land (plus land for roundabouts/overpasses etc.) will be required and 44 agricultural properties will be affected. 	<p>Your advocacy for the use of existing Highway 7&8 throughout the study corridor has been noted.</p> <p>During the 'Detailed Planning' phase, consideration was given to expansion of existing Highway 7&8 through Shakespeare. This alternative was not preferred through a process of comparative evaluation, as detailed in Report G, so it was not carried forward. Further, expansion of existing Highway 7&8 through Stratford does not address several of the problems the study set out to address, specifically transportation capacity and safety and interference with the "downtown / historic crossroads" function of Stratford so this alternative was not carried forward.</p> <p>The additional information released in September 2012 regarding potential agricultural impacts associated with the preliminary design alternatives included impacts associated with the main highway and the crossing road treatments. Please note that additional property is required west of Shakespeare beyond what the Ministry currently owns. This was included in the tabular information distributed in September.</p> <p>The range of Preliminary Design Alternatives presented at PIC #5 for public review and comment took into consideration network connectivity to and across the Highway 7&8 corridor, emergency service requirements, the movement of agricultural equipment as well as factors related to traffic demands, safety and mobility.</p> <p>Your concerns regarding roundabouts have been noted. The roundabout alternatives under consideration have been designed to accommodate larger trucks and farm equipment.</p> <p>The importance of agriculture within the study area is understood and the study team has consulted extensively with the broader agricultural community to refine agricultural criteria used through the study in recognition of the concerns regarding potential footprint impacts on farmland as well as other potential impacts related to integrated agricultural business units, agricultural infrastructure, residences, property severances and transportation linkages. While the importance of agriculture within the study area is understood, the environmental assessment process does not permit one criterion to be paramount. The assessment and evaluation of preliminary</p>

Comments	MTO Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the southern by- pass were followed, which does not use Road 110, 92.9 hectares of land (plus land for roundabouts/overpasses etc.) will be taken and 40 agricultural properties affected. • What is not revealed by the table nor the calculations supplied to us are the gains to be had by using the existing corridor. We have therefore calculated this to correct for its absence. For section E, we have added three hectares of land to the total loss to account for the land required from Road 106 to the edge of Shakespeare. We have also deleted the 26.6 hectares now required for the northern by-pass loop. Since the northern loop intersects with land already owned by MTO there would be no effective loss of any other farm land from the west side of Shakespeare all the way into Ontario Street. The total farm land required to expand the existing corridor to four lanes is 50.7 hectares. • ABC previously requested these calculations as we believe that land loss was the major factor for our area. We were told our request was premature and that we needed to wait for the design phase. On the basis of our new data calculations (which only arrived at the end of August after we specifically and formally requested them), we believe that a complete rethinking of the 'preferred corridor' is required. • The suggested northern by-pass route makes no sense at all to our community. The proposed southern by-pass route heavily affects the business of agriculture. The existing corridor, end to end, offers by far the most efficient use of farm frontage and other severed land. • Given this data and its implications the Agriculture Business Community cannot endorse either by-pass option and now strongly advocates for the use of the existing corridor. 	<p>design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors.</p> <p>The study team appreciates the input received from the agricultural community regarding existing farm businesses within the Analysis Area and has consulted extensively with the broader agricultural community. As the study progresses, the study team will continue to liaise with agricultural landowners to ensure more detailed information is available to support preliminary design activities. We will consult with the owners of farm properties impacted by the preferred route and with representatives of OMAFRA's Nutrient Management and Environmental Branch to ensure that the implications to nutrient management can be properly considered and addressed and to support preliminary design activities. Furthermore, the study team will systematically contact all relevant landowners along the preferred route to identify both public and private drains to support design work in subsequent design phases.</p>
<p><u>Road Safety From and Agricultural Perspective</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section echoes the Oct. 23 draft detailed safety concerns highlighted in the response to PIC # 5 prepared by the Council of Perth East. • Many of the arguments they raise concerning proposed features of new highway planning and the effects on Emergency Service Vehicle Response also apply to both the movement of large farm equipment and the general welfare of farm and non-farm residents. While we generally endorse their remarks we will not repeat their suggestions. • More particularly we also find that both bypass options will limit the directional circulation of traffic in and around Shakespeare and will have negative consequences. Furthermore, the use of any roundabouts, while they may be a popular choice for some newer corridors in urban areas, is questionable in this particular highway application. • It is impossible to imagine the equipment of today, navigating its way through roundabouts. • Roundabouts in an agriculturally intensive area are a recipe for disaster, slowing traffic and inviting collisions and driver confusion. 	
<p><u>The Future Viability of Affected Agricultural Properties</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the early days of the study the Agriculture Business Community (ABC) stressed the need for the consultants to become conversant with the legislative requirements of the Nutrient Management Act and its implication on the land requirements of individual livestock producers. • We carefully explained the link between livestock production, land, individual nutrient management plans and farm financing. We also made it quite clear that agricultural land is at a premium in the study area and not a readily available commodity to replace if sections are taken for highway development. • In 2008 ABC pointed out other problems with highway development and its impact on farm drainage, if there is limited oversight during the development stage of the highway and provided ongoing examples of drainage issues in the study area that have not been resolved over the past 17 years. • In 2010 ABC introduced MTO to the concept of Integrated Farm Business Units with a series of commissioned maps produced by the University of Waterloo. The maps showed a sampling of the complicated nature of land use and transportation patterns involving farm equipment that are required to support current farm practices (including nutrient management) within the study corridor. These maps were developed by ABC to visually portray the business of farming. • It became quite clear that continued access to all north-south concession crossings and improved safe use of the existing highway corridor for agricultural equipment is critical and paramount for continued business viability. • The agricultural land within the corridor is recognized as some of the best in Ontario if not Canada. The historical development within Perth County laid down the early patterns of land use. • Protection of agricultural land is critical to food production and protection of the agricultural transportation patterns is critical to viable businesses. • The identification of a selected route without a complementary time line for highway development will hold all impacted lands and buildings hostage. It is unconscionable that the MTO can hold so many viable agricultural businesses hostage for decades by corridor and design finalization and approval of the environmental assessment. 	

Comments	MTO Response
<p>Recommendation for the Selected Corridor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At each phase of the planning study, Agriculture Business Community (ABC) members have been told that the answers to their questions will be addressed in the next stage, too often they are not. • Waiting for accurate information – ABC has not previously endorsed any of the proposed corridors. As a result of the over engineered insult at the last PIC, and our recent information request, ABC is making a route selection recommendation. • Based on all the factors which will impact agricultural production, the most sensible corridor to utilize is the existing corridor. This option was tabled in PIC #3 and while it was subsequently removed from the option list so quickly, it still remains the most viable alternative. There are many sound and common sense reasons for our preference. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principally it ensures that the least amount of farmland will be lost. 2. It will utilize (finally) the existing land already taken out of production 30 years ago by MTO along the north side of the highway from Shakespeare to Stratford. 3. Most existing transportation patterns will not be further disrupted. 4. Farmers and rural residents along the existing corridor have been aware for many years of the possibility of highway expansion. Many have planned for it through new building setbacks and land parcel purchases and sales over three decades. 5. The acquisition of land and frontage from the train trestle to Shakespeare will have reduced impacts as many older buildings are also set well back from the corridor. 6. The existing corridor will put automobile travelers where they truly want to be when they arrive in Stratford, on Ontario Street right in the commercial development strip, where the big box shopping is and where Wal-Mart and Target will soon be and where all the signage points to the theatres and downtown. 7. The shortest distance between two points remains, as always, a straight line. • ABC therefore will not endorse either by pass option; neither north nor south of Shakespeare. • ABC recommends the expansion of the existing corridor for all of the above, logical reasons. • In the words of an ABC member: 'The Ministry (of Transportation) already owns most of the needed land. The impact on agriculture will be minimal. The impact for landlocked parcels will be minimal. The impact for severed farm business units will be minimal. The impact on closed crossroads will be minimal. And, the total cost will be much, much less.' • In the planning process other interests have made limited contributions to the community wide requirement of ensuring we have a safe, efficient roadway. Community safety and others sectors of the economy have been satisfied to have the agricultural community 'contribute the land and bear the losses'. • Landowners along the current corridor have always expected to contribute some frontage to the future safe improvement to the highway. Over the past 30 years they have also adapted their businesses, planned future buildings and developed their business plans to accommodate the future need. It is unconscionable that the current plan and design is so dismissive of the needs and economic health of this rural community. • The consultants identified the right approach during PIC # 3 when the existing corridor was further utilized and expanded. Unfortunately, all subsequent efforts at design give the appearance of being haphazard and piece-meal, taking the course of least resistance rather than providing a consistent and evenly applied solution. Now the MTO's preferred corridor is a series of compromises and curves sweeping through the countryside and across train tracks, with roundabouts now being proposed and an attempt to make the Lorne Avenue area Stratford's gateway reception area for highway traffic. None of this makes any practical sense. <p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1982, a member and former Shakespeare business owner and resident, received a letter from Dennis Timbrell, then Minister of Agriculture and Food (Annex 2). • In the letter Mr. Timbrell noted that in response to stakeholder input the planning for an expanded Highway 7/8 was abandoned. This decision, he argued, was a fine example of government responsiveness to citizen input. We are now thirty years on from that decision to do nothing and many more tax dollars have now been invested during the past four years by MTO. • What are we actually getting this time around? Many would argue not a whole lot. Getting it right does not mean appeasing stakeholders; it means that those charged with the task must find a solution that is appropriate to specific circumstances and one that uses accurate data that satisfies tests of common sense. • Utilizing the existing corridor for all vehicles is the only solution that meets the above criteria. While ABC cannot speak for all agricultural producers in the study area, it does speak for many and while we see the necessity to contribute some land to the overall objective of attaining a safe and efficient highway, we are not prepared to be the only contributors. Others must also do their part. 	

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<p>Annex 1- Farm Definitions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Agricultural Business Community of Perth East, Perth South and Wilmot West (ABC) have been actively participating in the Highway 7&8 Transportation Corridor Planning and Class EA Study since July 2008. We have experienced a process whereby MTO consultants present their goals to the community, complete inventories; define criteria to measure, present results on large scale maps and charts, record community comments from PICS and move on to their next stage. The type and quality of the information collected is entirely in the hands of the professionals. In many cases, ABC has pointed out errors in their assumptions and decision making data. With significant effort, ABC has been able to expand the criteria as it applies to agriculture. As early as our first brief in 2008 we also questioned their traffic projections. <p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABC continues to educate MTO and its consultants on the business of agriculture. We have given the consultants unprecedented access to our members, their expertise, their farm land and our community. Since 2008 we have asked the consultants to inventory agricultural producers to better understand our business, our issues of access, our land use, our legislative responsibilities and our infrastructure in order to understand the impact of route changes. We informed them that many of the farm homes were of historic significance and should be mapped. We told them their farm drainage maps were at least ten years out of date and should not be used for analysis. We shared with them the results of the University of Waterloo study claiming their water resource maps were at least 80% wrong. We provided them with timely mapping of Integrated Agricultural Business Units covering 7,744.69 hectares or 14,195.44 acres of the study area. In August 2012, in response to the information presented at PIC #5, ABC asked the consultants for additional information to better understand the impact of the different preliminary design alternatives on the business of agriculture. On September 21, 2012 ABC received a set of eight tables providing most of the requested information for the different options in the eight stretches of the route. The term "agricultural properties" plays an important role in the ability to decode these tables and understand the impact of the design options on the potential loss of farmland and access to our farm land cut off by severances and landlocked parcels. When ABC asked MTO we were provided with the following definition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "An agricultural property" is defined on a conservative basis to be any individual property outside the official plan urban areas not clearly commercial-only or residential- only based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property size, buildings, obvious activities occurring on the property, as determined through aerial photograph interpretation: Details provided in Report F Parts 1 and 2, "Working Paper- Environmental Conditions And Constraints: Information from individual farm owners obtained through field visits and through other consultation processes". A simple map based on study area boundaries provided by the Official Plan matched with data available from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) for farm properties and ground truthing would have delineated farm properties. A producer inventory as ABC has constantly requested, would have confirmed the accuracy. The EA process is a process of applying the same criteria to different options to determine the various outcomes. How can this process be effective if the data used is not accurate? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As discussed at the summer PIC 5 sessions, we have collected relevant info on the impact of an MTO bypass like the proposed extended and low-lying Northern Route on small communities like Shakespeare where they become invisible from the bypass and/or have indirect accesses. Some of this info was tedious to discover, uncover, collect, assess and then summarily integrate. We have now completed this, highlighting relevant considerations for the Hamlet of Shakespeare, and capsulizing implications for bypass routing and followup-planning consideration. As always, we appreciate the opportunity for input to your considerations and deliberations, and it is always a pleasure to work with your very professional group on this project. 	<p>Thank you for the detailed feedback you provided regarding the Shakespeare Business Association's concerns with the north bypass alternative. The importance of visibility and access to the business community are understood. Further, your concerns regarding the cost implications associated with the provision of signing within the highway right-of-way has been noted.</p> <p>The assessment and evaluation of preliminary design alternatives will be based on over 60 criteria from four major factor areas, specifically the natural environment, land use / socio-economic environment, cultural environment and transportation factors. The evaluation results and the preferred preliminary design alternative for the entire study corridor, including proposed mitigation measures, will be presented at PIC #6 for public review and comment.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response to proposed North bypass option for Hwy 7&8 around Shakespeare <p>A. Shakespeare Perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visibility from Hwy 7&8, either as it currently passes through the Hamlet, or in very close elevation and visual proximity, such as featured in the immediately adjacent South bypass, is an absolute requirement for survival of the Shakespeare business community. We have communicated this for years now to MTO and Perth East, the city of Stratford, among others as the core requirement of any bypass- the one thing we absolutely must have. We note with interest and dismay that the newly proposed North Bypass eliminating the all-important visual view of the Hamlet of Shakespeare from the highway featured in the South Bypass will totally destroy the business community in the Hamlet of Shakespeare, just as or more effectively than the previously selected 5-lane hwy through it's heart would have. The bypass swings from the East (@~360 m elevation), from where Shakespeare(390 m) is invisible, and swings far North of Shakespeare, and following (@~360 m) from where the hamlet of Shakespeare remains invisible, continuing around and through 	

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<p>valley drainage some 30 meters elevation below the ~390 m elevation crest of the hamlet, and at a nearly 100' drop below the crest of Shakespeare as it crosses Hwy 107 and then heads West and South again, remaining throughout at an elevation below and out of sight of the community. We threw this Northern option out over 3 years ago, for all of these and other reasons. Nothing has changed to make it any more appropriate today. The North bypass totally loses the all-important Shakespeare Hamlet visibility feature, as well as the slip road through Shakespeare to Stratford Shakespeare Festival Country, and we cannot do without these features at all costs. Also, all of the very extensive truck traffic coming North from Woodstock to Tavistock regions on Hwy 59 and then traversing to Hwy 7&8 East or West will still have to go through the heart of Shakespeare and either turn in Shakespeare as presently or go North through Shakespeare to reach the North bypass.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversely, the South bypass was an acceptable compromise, so long as the key visibility of road traffic to the Hamlet of Shakespeare was maintained (both in proximity as well as elevation) as folks passed by round Shakespeare, and could then choose a Hwy 59/107 turnoff. Travelers from the East also had the option of taking the direct slip road off as the business/Stratford Shakespeare Festival Country exit. Further, the area immediately South of and adjacent to Hwy 7&8 just as it crests the ridge coming into Shakespeare from the East, contains the largest Shakespeare employer, Faromor/Stonecrest companies (~40 employees), manufacturing agricultural environmental and energy equipment for both local and international distribution, requiring ready truck access. Shakespeare also has a community feedmill complex, a regional fertilizer plant, and a new wastewater treatment plant for the hamlet, all located on the Southern periphery of Shakespeare. Further there are long-term plans afoot to make an area between the highway and the railroad a light industrial zone to support further integration of these activities in one area. With this development, the South bypass becomes an essential element, much like the desired location for the Hwy 7&8 corridor in the industrial corridor in Stratford. <p>B. Shakespeare's Challenge: How other Ontario MTO Bypassed Communities Have Fared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shakespeare will become Trout Creek (left), Nobel, or Estaire Ontario in spades with this approach. The North bypass as proposed will be as much as 30 m (100') below the crest of Shakespeare in elevation, and a long way from anything in the core of the Hamlet, very unlike the South bypass which parallels the Hamlet right adjacent to it. Shakespeare will effectively be no more visible from the bypass than Trout Creek (above) or Nobel Ontario (right) is today. The bypass effectively killed Trout Creek and is killing Nobel. Even a well-established and thriving Tim Hortons' had to make the tough decision to immediately pull up stakes and leave Nobel within weeks of the November 2010 Nobel bypass opening, as business slowed to a trickle as documented in the immediately pre (above) and post (right) bypass opening photo-documentation illustrated herein. Mom & pop businesses might try to hang on to a thread of their former existence after a bypass opens, but the international behemoth-Tim Hortons could not, and closed, putting 60 persons out of work immediately. Quite a blow for the small town of Nobel. Without visibility from the bypass as it rounds Shakespeare, there is no impetus to take a Hwy 107 turnoff to see roadway now-invisible quaint Hamlet stop & shop points of interest, Shakespeare will become yet another casualty of development like the decade-ago visually bypassed Trout Creek, recently bypassed and now traffic-free Nobel (above), and other Ontario communities have, and will become devoid of viable drive-by and drop-in businesses as Trout Creek and now Nobel (below), among others have. Nobel Ontario lost 4 businesses within a month of the bypass opening in 2010. The impact when traffic leaves is simply devastating. Shakespeare will simply become just one more bedroom community for other municipalities. Not a bad option for many residential folks, but the death knell for businesses. Is this really MTO and our local Perth East etc. municipalities preferences?? We include extensive and key info to conclusively document the both immediate and longer-term demise of these communities by the Ontario MTO bypasses (see extensive attached documentation). What happens to a small town when it's bypassed by a new billion-dollar highway? John Michels is spending six summers (2008-2014) in Canada looking for answers. The PhD candidate in anthropology plans to study half a dozen communities, each home to about 1,000 people, in the Almaguin Highlands of Ontario. "The entire highlands are being fourlaned," he said. "Sundridge and South River are being bypassed and others have already been bypassed—Burk's Falls and Powassan. The most visible example to be bypassed was Trout Creek, and more recently, Nobel, and Estaire. The results were pretty devastating—the one gas station there was closed. You hear people say, 'You don't want to end up like Trout Creek.'" Trout Creek (above) is a community of 1000 population, much like Shakespeare, with few business now left standing a decade after the bypass, and those few still left only a shadow of their former selves (photo's above). To survive a bypass, visual access from the bypass is key to enticing travelers to stop and browse. Without clear, consistent, and close visual access, they simply drive on. Trout Creek was similar-largely dependent on travelers and tourists going through to stop for food, fuel and lodging. They became invisible. They disappeared. The lone Langs Restaurant and Petro-Canada gas bar gas station closed soon after the bypass opened, as their business instantly evaporated on the opening of the bypass, and Petro Canada recently demolished the closed gas station, making it permanent. The bed and breakfast successfully sued MTO to buy them out for loss of business. The motels and restaurants tried to hang on without traveler revenue. The general store survived in a reduced form with local business. 	

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<p>• In November 2010, immediately after the Nobel bypass opened, the local Shell gas station's receipts dropped from \$4-5,000/day to \$166/day, and the Shell supplier then pulled their franchise-so the owner no longer even had gas to sell (left). K & M Family Restaurant (below), typically served 40 or 50 customers, but as soon as that traffic had been rerouted to Highway 400, it was lucky to have served 9-10, and so it soon closed permanently. The nearby Tim Hortons and Wendy's complex both closed a month later as well, as noted earlier on p4.</p> <p>C. Shakespeare's Options to Meet the Upcoming Challenges other Communities Have Faced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly, Ontario communities of Shakespeare's size and demographics have fared miserably following evaporation of traveling customers due to bypasses routing their customer base elsewhere. Shakespeare does not and will not have the wherewithall to mount a sustained marketing campaign like St Jacobs or Frankenmuth. Signage, which everyone brings up, is a non-starter, both in terms of ineffectiveness and exorbitant cost. The TDOS road sign company requires over \$2500 rent/year for each business's logo placard on the exit sign. The small businesses simply could not afford this. The absence of empathy on the part of MTO to the bypassed communities signage problems is well documented (see attached). Once the bypass is in and the traffic is diverted away from the business community, MTO could care less. The answer from MTO was there were plenty of PIC sessions to make concerns heard. Sounds all too familiar. What's needed is not more PIC sessions, but solutions to problems created, logistical and long-term financial, with now undisputable evidence documenting devastating immediate as well as longer term impacts of recent Ontario MTO bypasses on Ontario small business community's. • Shakespeare's small businesses are no different. The \$2500 annual sign placard fee would be an impossible annual rental fee for most of our small businesses. Not knowing what the local road will actually evolve to- rates go to as much as \$5000/year for each logo placard on the Highway exit info sign. The SBA had difficulty getting folks to pay \$150 or \$300/year for our Hamlet business improvement and marketing efforts-many simply could not afford it. <p>D. Shakespeare's Role in Commerce and Regional Tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare, since its very inception, has been the heart of the local and regional agricultural community, and with any highway solution, is destined to remain so. Shakespeare is no stranger to commercial wagon, then rail and now truck commerce, and has supported a local trucking industry for as long as there have been trucks. What is needed however, is a traffic solution whereby the bulk of the commercial-through trucking industry can easily reach Stratford's industrial centre's and beyond without disruption of the stop & shop traveler based tourism, which is the heart of the Shakespeare business economy. The current level of heavy truck commerce traversing and turning at the intersection of Hwy 7&8 and Hwy 59/107 dissuades many tourists from even venturing to Shakespeare, much less stopping to browse. Clearly a solution is needed, and the local business community has been advocating for a diversion of heavy over-the-road truck traffic from the Shakespeare corridor for decades. Our preferred Shakespeare solution of a truck and commercial traffic Shakespeare-bypass with all tourist traffic continuing through Shakespeare and on to Stratford Shakespeare Festival Theatre venues and/or Shakespeare to the Shoreline destinations remains our preferred option, as it has always been in all prior submissions. • We are not and will never be a first-tier marketable destination like a St Jacobs, or Frankenmuth Michigan, with the kinds of resources necessary to build and market Shakespeare as such a destination. • We are more like a Trout Creek or Nobel Ontario, and a bypass where Shakespeare is invisible – ie. the newly proffered Northern Route will tip the lever-just like in Trout Creek, Nobel, Burks Falls, Estaire and the other small towns on Hwy 11 and Hwy 69/400 corridors. <p>E. Shakespeare's Bottom Line:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Northern route eliminates the needed visibility and dooms the Hamlet to becoming a bedroom community. The only option for most travel - stop and browse businesses would be to relocate along the bypass or and/or sue MTO to buy the businesses for lost revenue or both. No guarantee of success here. • When properly motivated, MTO has employed a BC (buy-and-close) mindset, which solves the immediate financial concerns for the individual businesses that successfully sue MTO, but does little to assure success of the remaining folks in the larger business community. <p>Key Conclusions and Take Home Lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1) A longer Hwy 7&8 route looping far North & much below Shakespeare to South Stratford, takes more and different-but not less total real estate than a direct Southern route. Just someone else's OX is getting gored. • 2) A route traversing through the valley landscape some 30 M below the elevation of Shakespeare makes Shakespeare invisible to incoming bypassed potential customers • 3) The Northern bypass route eliminates the required Eastern entry slip road-eliminating this destroys our core Shakespeare tourism & travel dependent stop & browse & shop business • 4) Our Eastern corridor light industrial businesses that also require this slip road access-and are Shakespeare's largest employers-need the Southern truck bypass route traveling right by the industrial area. 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5) As the experience in the US and now in Ontario with MTO bypassed under-1000 person communities irrefutably clearly documents, the Northern invisible-Shakespeare route is simply not a survivable business community option• 6) The MTO's BC (buy & close) program, already applied to one Shakespeare area entity, simply hastens an early end to Shakespeare & Area businesses, commerce, institutions and the business district as a whole.• Our SBA (or at least most of our members) did not roll over when MTO wanted to slice off the first 25-30 feet of each business for a 5 lane, pitting grandmothers against 18-wheelers, and responded with a well-documented submission as a bone to chew on. Our response is nothing less this time, whether it's MTO or our very own local Perth East Council we must do battle with that is trying once again to drive our businesses out of the Hamlet. Folks will understand if we are a little jaundiced when our own Perth East Council seems bent on helping us in this way. <p>End-of-the-Day Bottom-Line Take Home Message:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A bypass, once planned, can be built rather quickly, and the evaporation of traffic is immediate on bypass opening. Redevelopment of a new sustainable business community with a different focus will require decades of dedicated inputs.	