



OUTREACH AND CONSULTATION PLAN

A major component of the study will be an outreach and consultation program structured around six key points of decision-making, each of which will be supported by:

- the release of a newsletter;
- the release of draft reports for review and comment;
- a round of Public Information Centres (PICs);
- posting of information on the study web site; and
- newspaper notices announcing the above.

All reports and our approach to upcoming work are available on the project website, at local municipal offices and at the Public Information Centres.



PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR COMMENTS

Reports A, B and F (Part I) have been prepared in draft in order to obtain information and comments from stakeholders. Your input is requested by October 30, 2007 so the reports can be finalized.

Your input is also requested on the approach to the following upcoming work:

- process to define 'Area Transportation System' problems and opportunities
- process and criteria for evaluating and selecting 'Area Transportation System' alternatives
- process, factors and criteria for generating, assessing and evaluating preliminary planning alternatives

INTRODUCTION

This is the first in a series of seven newsletters that will be released over the course of the Highway 7 & 8 Transportation Corridor Planning and Class EA Study. During the lifespan of the Planning and Class EA Study, the newsletters will explain where we are in the study process, provide a project status update, and describe the activities that are taking place. Each newsletter will also notify you of events and documents that will be available for review. Our Project Team appreciates your interest and we trust that you will find these newsletters to be a valuable information resource as the study proceeds.

THE PROJECT

The Highway 7 & 8 Transportation Corridor Planning and Class Environmental Assessment (EA) Study will develop a plan that addresses:

- capacity, operation and safety needs along the 2-lane section of Highway 7 & 8 between Stratford and New Hamburg and through the urban centres of Stratford, Shakespeare and New Hamburg for the movement of people and goods; and
- linkage needs within the Analysis Area for broader transportation connections to other regions in the province.

The study will also:

- prepare a preliminary design for the provincial roadway components of that plan;
- review and build on the findings of the Study Design Report completed by MTO in 2006;
- address the policies and growth forecasts of the final Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, released by the province on June 16, 2006; and
- be documented in a Transportation Environmental Study Report for public review at study completion.

The study will be carried out as a Group 'A' project in accordance with the Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities.

HOW CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION OR COMMENT ON THE STUDY?

Your comments and question are always welcome and can be submitted at any time during the Class EA process. Your interest in this study is greatly appreciated.

All stakeholders and interested members of the public who are on our contact mailing list will receive a mailed invitation to attend PICs. If you are new to the area or know someone who would be interested, please contact the project team. Please watch for upcoming information on the study.

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ANALYSIS AREA

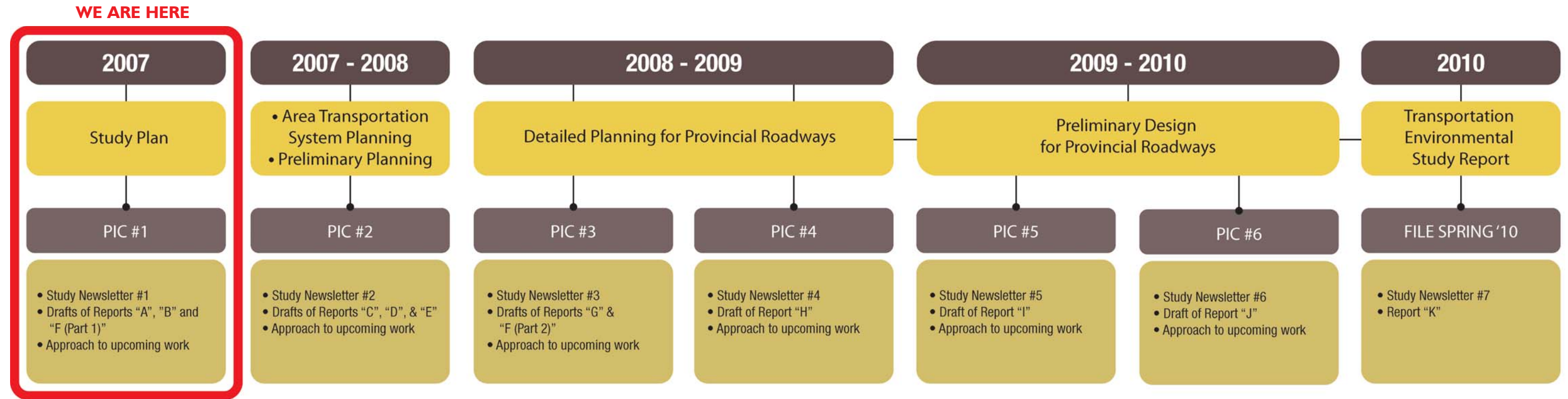


Visit our project website for regular updates and notices of events: www.7and8corridorstudy.ca

Get Involved... Be involved... Stay involved.

STUDY PROCESS

Major study phases, reports and formal points of contact are shown in the following diagram:



STUDY OBJECTIVES

- To identify and assess the factors that are driving 'Area Transportation System' needs
- To apply those driving factors in developing a Transportation Development Strategy to address long-term multi-year needs for the movement of people and goods
- To undertake the planning and preliminary design of the provincial roadway components (provincial highways and provincial transitways) of those strategies
- To conduct the planning and preliminary design of provincial roadways with an inherent approach of avoiding or minimizing overall environmental impacts
- To identify highway access management measures for growth management and highway protection
- To engage public and stakeholders early in the study process and continue to engage them throughout the study process

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- There are transportation capacity concerns for the movement of both people and goods along the 2-lane section of Highway 7 & 8 between Stratford and New Hamburg and through the urban centres of Stratford, Shakespeare and New Hamburg.
- Provincial / inter-regional traffic through the urban centres (Stratford and Shakespeare) along Highway 7 & 8 interferes with their "downtown / historic crossroads" function.
- The connection of the analysis area to transportation corridors serving other regions in the province may be inadequate for long-term transportation and economic development needs.
- Geometric and traffic safety characteristics on Highway 7 & 8 should be addressed with respect to long-term traffic needs.
- There is currently no comprehensive highway access management plan for Highway 7 & 8 from Greater Stratford to New Hamburg to protect highway needs and to address the GGH policy of discouraging inappropriate highway-related growth.
- The GGH Growth Plan policy of co-ordinating transportation system planning and land use planning must be addressed.

DRAFT REPORT A: Study Plan for Technical Work, Outreach and Consultation

This Study Plan is the first deliverable of the planning and Class EA Study. The Study Plan establishes the framework and commitments for conducting the planning and Class EA Study, particularly in the areas of:

- study purpose and objectives;
- study process;
- study reports;
- outreach and consultation program;
- study schedule; and
- processes to generate and evaluate alternatives.

The Study Plan builds on the principles and processes for transportation engineering, environmental protection, evaluation, consultation and documentation that are specified in the 'Class EA for Provincial Transportation Facilities'.

DRAFT REPORT B: Working Paper - Overview of Transportation, Land Use and Economic Conditions within the Analysis Area

Report 'B' provides baseline transportation and socio-economic data upon which the study will be built. Therefore a key focus of Report

'B' involves "looking back" at previous MTO studies and then "looking forward" through the identification of the key factors that are driving the 'Area Transportation System' needs. This will allow for the appropriate scoping of the technical and consultation requirements of the Class EA and Preliminary Design components of the Study.

DRAFT REPORT F (Part I): Working Paper - Environmental Conditions and Constraints

Report 'F' documents the existing environmental conditions and constraints. Significant and sensitive features of the natural, socio-economic and cultural environments will be identified so these areas can be avoided or impacts minimized during the generation and evaluation of planning alternatives.

Environmental investigations rely heavily on information obtained through shared government data bases, approving agencies and ministries, local municipalities, First Nations and the general public. The early and continuous engagement of stakeholders during the study is an important means of enhancing the Project Team's understanding of significant and sensitive features of the natural, socio-economic and cultural environments in the analysis area.