

Joint Statement

The Interprovincial Crossings Study is led jointly by the National Capital Commission (NCC), the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and the Québec Ministry of Transportation, with technical support from the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau. The Study as currently envisaged is focused on selecting one out of three potential corridors for building a new bridge east of the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge.

One of the most critical issues facing the Region is the passage of about 2,500 heavy trucks per day between Highway 417 and the Macdonald – Cartier bridge, through residential streets in Ottawa’s downtown. The consequences in terms of health, safety and degradation of the surrounding areas are well-known and unacceptable. An environmentally sustainable solution must be found, one that does not simply spread the problem to even more neighbourhoods.

Phase 1 of the Study has recommended that heavy trucks be permitted on both the new corridor and the current approaches to the Macdonald - Cartier bridge, with the majority of the trucks remaining in the downtown core. The City of Ottawa Official Plan states that heavy trucks should be removed from the current King Edward, Rideau, Waller, Nicholas (KERWN) corridor once a new bridge is constructed. Meanwhile, the City of Gatineau has passed a motion that requests that heavy trucks remain on the King Edward corridor.

Significant uncertainty exists as to what will happen with heavy trucks if a new bridge is built. Will all heavy trucks be removed from Ottawa’s downtown? Will trucks be diffused between the new bridge and downtown? Will all heavy trucks be forced to use the new crossing? Who has the legal authority to ban heavy trucks on the KERWN corridor (since it serves as an interconnection between the Quebec and Ontario highway systems)? Would this decision be subject to legal appeal and potential negotiation?

Our organizations believe that these questions must be clearly answered in order to engage in meaningful public consultations in Phase 2B of the Study, and to enable a clear focus on the critical truck issue. We urge the Interprovincial Crossings Study Team to recognize the solidarity and determination of the public, as represented by our organizations, and to resolve this critical issue.

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Name and Position

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Organization

2nd June 2010

A Supporter of Sustainable Solutions