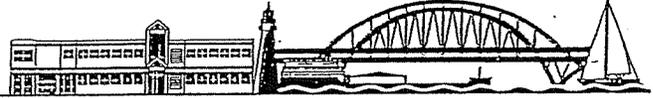




## COUNTY OF ST. CLAIR

St. Clair County Transportation Study  
GORDON RUTTAN, Director



## SCCOTS

January 3, 2003

Mr. Chris Nazar  
Wilbur Smith Associates  
6709 Centurion Drive, Suite 220  
Lansing, Michigan 48917

Dear Mr. Nazar:

SCCOTS Staff has developed the following five priority measures of effectiveness for alternatives in the redesign of the Blue Water Bridge Plaza:

1. Minimizing the impact or displacement of the community to the immediate north and south of the existing Plaza.
  - This community contains minority and/or low-income residents. Project staff should consider that the 'Environmental Justice' population may not have access to the Internet or even a telephone, and should consider the distribution of flyers to residents and property owners in the area adjacent to the Plaza.
  - The community contains a neighborhood church and possibly historic structures.
  - The previous designs of the plaza have separated the traditional downtown of Port Huron from its 'North End'. These Plazas have placed the needs of user agencies before then needs of the community they disrupt. SCCOTS Staff does not consider the timing of public involvement activities appropriate after the Illustrative Alternatives phase of the project. Reasonable public comment should influence the Practical Alternatives phase of the project, not simply be documented in the study results.
2. Reducing 'nuisance factors' created by users of the Plaza. Noise, light, and vehicle emissions should be considered in designing the new layout. In particular, the combustion of diesel fuel generates high amounts of sulfur; therefore trucks should not be idling in an inspection staging area adjacent to residential land uses.
3. Reduction of vehicle crashes at the intersection of Pine Grove Avenue and Hancock Street. The vehicular movements generated by the existing configuration of the plaza have created a confusing and dangerous intersection.

4. The increase of passenger vehicle movement from eastbound I-94 to downtown Port Huron in conjunction with a decrease of commercial vehicles being routed through the City. This will increase access to the City for the motoring public and increase the development opportunities for underutilized properties on Pine Grove Avenue south of the current plaza.
5. The reduction in State Equalized Value (SEV) that will occur with the development of the new Plaza (replacement of viable tax base with tax-exempt properties) should be offset by the redevelopment and increase of SEV of the aforementioned underutilized properties south of the existing Plaza.

Please, do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Doug Plachcinski  
Transportation Planner II

CC: St. Clair County Transportation Study Advisory Committee

## MEMO

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments  
535 Griswold Street, Suite 300  
Detroit, Michigan 48226  
(313) 961-4266  
Fax (313) 961-4869  
[www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org)

January 7, 2003

TO: Chris Nazar, Wilbur Smith Associate

FROM: Alex Bourgeau, Qiang Hong

SUBJECT: Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) for Evaluating Alternatives

CC: Carmine Palombo

We would like to recommend the following Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) to be used in evaluating Blue Water Bridge Plaza Study alternatives:

- **Efficiency** – to enhance the efficiency of the U.S. side of the Blue Water Bridge relative to toll and customs/immigration processing, potentially measured by estimating improved border crossing times for passenger vehicles and trucks.
- **Capacity** – potentially measured by passenger vehicle and truck volumes.
- **Minimize negative impacts to local community** – measured by amount of displaced land uses, residents, housings etc.
- **Enhanced connection with local community** – the selected alternative should provide an adequate connection to the local community to allow for a capture of certain travelers to enhance the local economy, measured by alternative's connectivity to Port Huron.
- **Security** – not sure how to measure other than qualitatively. A clear need to be considered, however.

Other measures that could be considered from a regional and long-term perspective include customer satisfaction (e.g. survey responses from passengers, truck drivers, trucking and auto industry representatives) and ability to attract long distance trips (e.g. percent of trips originated in or destined to regions other than Southeast Michigan and Southwest Ontario).

Let us know if you have any additional questions. Thanks.

# Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

February 6, 2003

Steven A. Perry, General Services Administrator  
 1800 F Street, NW  
 Washington, D.C. 205054

Dear Administrator Perry:

Since September 11, 2001, significant progress has been made at border crossings across the Northern Border. These resources have been crucial in ensuring that our twin goals of seamless and secure trade across our Northern Border are met. While new staff has arrived, it is important for GSA to focus upon the necessary infrastructure and technology improvements that will aid our border personnel in performing their duties.

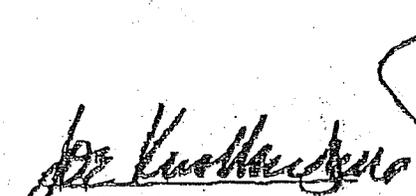
In our own State of Michigan, the Ambassador Bridge, the Detroit Windsor Tunnel, the Blue Water Bridge, and the International Bridge have specific and immediate infrastructure and technology needs required to handle the large increases in federal staffing. In particular, at the Detroit Windsor Tunnel and the Ambassador Bridge there is inadequate parking for federal inspection agents and agency customers, inadequate primary and secondary inspection space, and the need for facility renovations and building construction are issues that need to be addressed expeditiously.

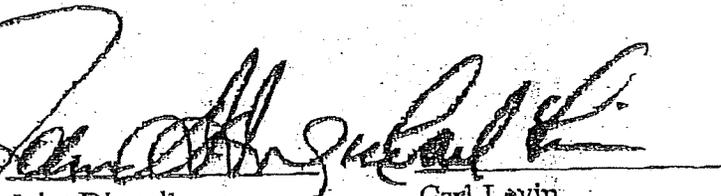
It has also been brought to our attention that a number of projects have been requested and bid out for contract but remain unfunded or delayed by GSA. These delays are causing great inefficiencies and it is important they are resolved promptly. These improvements will ensure that our border personnel are performing their duties as efficiently and effectively as possible.

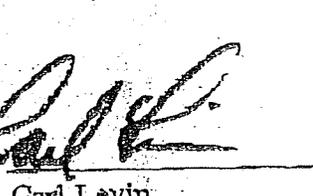
We urge GSA to expedite border enhancements and improvements in safety, security, and efficiency. This includes giving prompt attention to requests to improve infrastructure and upgrade technology. Michigan's and the nation's security and economic well being are at stake.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

  
 Joe Knollenberg  
 Member of Congress

  
 John Dingell  
 Member of Congress

  
 Carl Levin  
 U.S. Senator

*Fred Upton*

Fred Upton  
Member of Congress

*Dave Camp*

Dave Camp  
Member of Congress

*Vern Ehlers*

Vern Ehlers  
Member of Congress

*Peter Hoekstra*

Peter Hoekstra  
Member of Congress

*Nick Smith*

Nick Smith  
Member of Congress

*Mike Rogers*

Mike Rogers  
Member of Congress

*Thaddeus McCotter*

Thaddeus McCotter  
Member of Congress

*Candice Miller*

Candice Miller  
Member of Congress

*Debbie Stabenow*

Debbie Stabenow  
U.S. Senator

*Carolyn Kilpatrick*

Carolyn Kilpatrick  
Member of Congress

*John Conyers, Jr.*

John Conyers, Jr.  
Member of Congress

*Dale Kildee*

Dale Kildee  
Member of Congress

*Sander Levin*

Sander Levin  
Member of Congress

*Bart Stupak*

Bart Stupak  
Member of Congress

March 19, 2003

Mr. Chris Nazer  
Transportation Planner  
Wilbur Smith Associates  
6709 Centurion Drive Suite 220  
Lansing, Michigan 48917

Re: Blue Water Bridge  
Authority's Position Pertaining to the  
U.S. Plaza Study

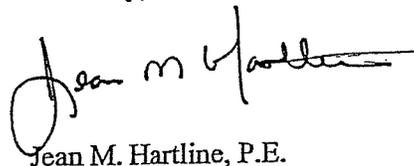
Dear Mr. Nazer,

We are pleased to submit to the Michigan Department of Transportation and Wilbur Smith Associates two (2) copies of *Key Canadian Elements to be Considered in Developing a Purpose and Need Statement Blue Water Bridge Gateway U.S. Plaza Study* dated March 12, 2003.

This report provides documentation pertaining to the Blue Water Bridge Authorities (BWBA) position and desires related to the MDOT study of the U.S. Plaza. The BWBA has identified specific issues to be addressed as part of the study and planning process of the U.S. Plaza. We, respectfully, are requesting that the attached report be included in the record for the U.S. Plaza Study.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to call me directly.

Sincerely,



Jean M. Hartline, P.E.  
Senior Transportation Engineer

Cc: Mr. Kris Wisniewski, Specialist, Federal Binational Policy, MDOT w/ attachments  
Mr. Robert Parsons, Public Hearing Officer, MDOT w/ attachments  
Mr. Paul McAllister, NEPA Compliance, MDOT w/ attachments  
Mr. Todd J. Davis, Manager Env/Transportation Planning Services, WSA, w/attachments  
Mr. Kirk Haybarker, AICP, Regional Director of Environmental Services, WSA  
Mr. Dan Elash, Blue Water Bridge Authority w/attachments



March 19, 2003

Mr. Chris Nazer  
Transportation Planner  
Wilbur Smith Associates  
6709 Centurion Drive Suite 220  
Lansing, Michigan 48917

Re: Blue Water Bridge  
Authority's Position Pertaining to the  
U.S. Plaza Study

Dear Mr. Nazer,

We are pleased to submit to the Michigan Department of Transportation and Wilbur Smith Associates the following materials:

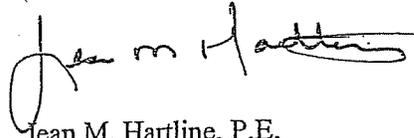
- *Report to the Blue Water Bridge Authority – Study of Operational Safety* dated January 20, 1997 by the Delcan Corporation
- *Blue Water Bridge: US Plaza Review* dated October 1999 by Delphi Systems, Inc.
- *Blue Water Bridge: Road Safety Audit* dated January 2000 by Delphi Systems, Inc.
- *Final Report to the Blue Water Bridge Authority Blue Water Bridge: Study of Operational Safety – Update* dated June 28, 2000 by the Delcan Corporation
- *Blue Water Bridge US Plaza Space Allocation Study* dated November, 2000 by GCS Technology
- *Blue Water Bridge Authority – Photographic Report 402 Highway Backups* dated June 7, 1999 (disk)
- *Short Term Canadian Weave Mitigation Effort* (disk)
- *BWBA Video* dated December 1999 (disk)
- *Blue Water Bridge Authority* (videotape)

These reports and videos will provide supporting documentation pertaining to the concerns and request provided by the Blue Water Bridge Authority in *Key Canadian Elements to be Considered in Developing a Purpose and Need Statement - Blue Water Bridge Gateway U.S. Plaza Study* dated March 12, 2003. (transmitted under separate cover): The attached material should be reviewed as part of the Canadian Stakeholders' interest in the U.S. Plaza Study.



Should you have any questions, please feel free to call me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jean M. Hartline".

Jean M. Hartline, P.E.  
Senior Transportation Engineer

Cc: Mr. Kris Wisniewski, Specialist, Federal Binational Policy, MDOT  
Mr. Robert Parsons, Public Hearing Officer, MDOT  
Mr. Paul McAllister, NEPA Compliance, MDOT  
Mr. Todd J. Davis, WSA, Manager Environmental/Transportation Planning Services  
Mr. Kirk Haybarker, AICP, Regional Director of Environmental Services,  
Mr. Dan Elash, Blue Water Bridge Authority

## WILLIAM-LYNN-JAMES, INC.

Post Office Box 2772  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
Phone: (317) 972-4242  
Direct Dial: (317) 738-2323  
Fax: (317) 736-4323  
Email: [wlj@wlj.biz](mailto:wlj@wlj.biz)  
Home Page: [www.wlj.biz](http://www.wlj.biz)

April 7, 2003

Chris Nazar  
Wilbur Smith Associates  
6709 Centurion Drive  
Suite 220  
Lansing, MI 48917  
Phone: 517-323-0500

Re: Charrette on the 29<sup>th</sup>

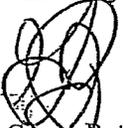
Chris,

Just a quick note to touch base concerning the charrette exercise on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for seeking the input of the Blue Water Bridge Authority through this charrette process. Dan Elash, President/CEO of the Blue Water Bridge Authority, has put together a team to help facilitate the BWBA's positions on the re-design of the American Plaza. This team is led by Joe Lopetrone, Paige William's counterpart, and is rounded out with Ken Jarvela, Bruce Campbell, and Jane Graham. Ed Teft has been designated as an alternate. Ted Gibson and Dan Elash will be joining the process after lunch from 1-3 p.m.

This team assembled by Dan Elash will bring to the charrette process a historical understanding of the Blue Water Bridge Gateway. The BWBA will follow up the meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> by preparing formal comments and submitting these comments to Wilbur Smith within thirty days of the close of the charrette exercise.

On behalf of the Blue Water Bridge Authority, we wanted to thank you again for extending to us this opportunity.

Sincerely,



Garry Petersen

GJP/kam

**Blue Water Bridge Plaza Study**  
**St. Clair County, Michigan**  
MDOT J.N. 57779

**Technical Memorandum**  
**Initial Concepts Charrette Summary**

*Prepared for:*

**The Michigan Department of Transportation**  
and  
**The Federal Highway Administration**

*Submitted by:*

**Wilbur Smith Associates, Inc. Michigan**

**Submitted on: May 20, 2003**

# Initial Concepts Charrette Study

## Blue Water Bridge Plaza Study

St. Clair County, Michigan

MDOT JN 57779

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

On April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2003 the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) held an Initial Concepts Charrette with stakeholders for the Blue Water Bridge Plaza Study. A charrette is a workshop to facilitate an open discussion between stakeholders of a project, which typically uses a mixture of brainstorming and laying out of potential alternatives. The Initial Concepts Charrette was organized and led by Wilbur Smith Associate (WSA), MDOT's prime consultant for the study and was held at the St. Clair County Administration Building in Port Huron, Michigan.

The Charrette was attended by 47 people representing a wide variety of border crossing related stakeholders including representatives from:

- Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (BCBP) of the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS),
- United States General Services Administration (GSA),
- United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA),
- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA),
- Blue Water Bridge Authority (BWBA), operator of the Canadian side of the crossing,
- Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA),
- City of Port Huron,
- St. Clair County Transportation Study (SCCOTS),
- Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG),
- Customs Brokers,
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA),
- MDOT, and
- The Study Consultant Team.

Most of the participants were members of the Study Advisory Committee, which had met several times prior to the Charrette. All Charrette participants or representatives from their agencies will be invited to future Advisory Committee meetings.

At the start of the day, the Study Team identified the following reasons for holding the Charrette:

- To encourage participants' understanding of each others' issues and concerns,
- To identify concepts that address the study objectives,
- To identify potential cost saving measures for further analysis, and
- To identify new issues of concern from participants.

This report outlines the methods and tools used during the Charrette and summarizes the results.

## 2.0 CHARRETTE METHODOLOGY

The Charrette was held between 9:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. on Tuesday April 29, 2003. The following paragraphs summarize how the Charrette proceeded.

Sign-in and Introduction (9:00-9:20 A.M.): The participants signed in and received a nametag. The nametag listed the participant's group letter in the bottom right hand corner. This time

period allowed for introductions and conversation over refreshments and enabled participants to find their groups.

Initial Presentation (9:20-10:00 A.M.): Kirk Haybarker, WSA Project Manager, gave an initial overview of the Charrette objectives, formats, and procedures using a PowerPoint™ presentation. Kirk thanked St. Clair County for their assistance in hosting the Charrette.

Breakout Groups (10:00-11:30 A.M. and 12:15-1:00 P.M.): Charrette participants were pre-assigned to one of five breakout groups. Each breakout group included representatives from the plaza inspection agencies, Canadian officials, and local stakeholders. Each breakout group also featured a consultant facilitator and a representative from MDOT to help guide the process. The facilitators were instructed to minimize their own input into the development of concepts while encouraging all participants to develop ideas for potential layouts. Each group was asked to select a presenter (other than the facilitator or MDOT staff) who would present the group's results to all of the Charrette participants.

Each breakout group was assigned two specific objectives to focus on in their initial concept development. These objectives came from a list developed through previous meetings with stakeholders. Each breakout group was also given sets of scaled aerial maps on which to develop their concepts and an array of pencils, markers, and other stationary items. The breakout groups were also provided with a set of foam mounted cutouts (refer to Figure 1) which represented various plaza facilities and were scaled to the required size to accommodate forecast 2030 traffic volumes. Participants were informed that these cutouts were only guides and that they could cut and reshape them as they saw fit.

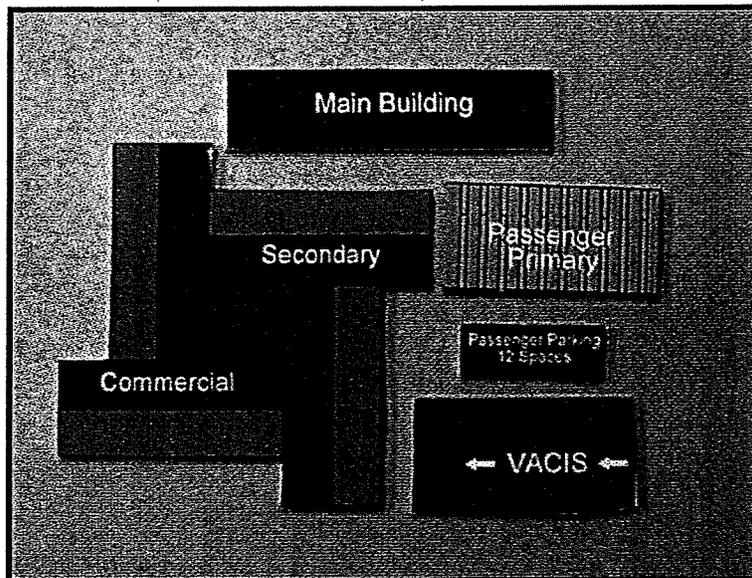


Figure 1 Sample Facility Cutouts

The breakout sessions began with introductions and an explanation from the facilitator of the tools available. Groups then brainstormed their responses to their assigned objectives and other issues of importance to the members of the group. The facilitator or other group members wrote notes during the brainstorming on chart paper, which were attached to the wall for reference during concept development. Following the brainstorming, groups worked on concepts using the supplied maps and cutouts. A sandwich lunch was held in the Charrette room between 11:30 A.M. and 12:15 P.M. during which participants were given the option of breaking or continuing to work on their plaza concept while eating. Following lunch participants were asked to finalize the concept plans they were working on and/or start on a second concept if their first was already completed. At the end of the breakout sessions, groups were asked to develop a brief summary of their plaza concepts for their presenter to communicate to all of the Charrette participants.

Presentations (1:00-2:15 P.M.): The designated presenters for each group gave a 10 to 15 minute overview of the major issues their group had considered and the concepts their group had developed. To assist with the presentations, a member of the Study Team took digital photos of each of the concepts prepared by the groups towards the end of the breakout sessions. These photos were uploaded into PowerPoint™ and displayed on a screen behind the presenters for easy, large-scale reference. Chart paper notes with summaries of the group ideas were also attached to easels so that Charrette participants could reference them during the presentations.

Kirk Haybarker served as the moderator during the presentations and briefly highlighted some of the ideas presented, and the similarities and differences between concepts following each presentation. All other Charrette participants were invited to comment or ask questions about the concepts developed by each group. Each presentation was followed by approximately four or five questions or comments.

Summary (2:15-2:30 P.M.): Kirk Haybarker briefly provided an overall summary of the day and the results and asked if there were further comments or questions. Following a brief final discussion, Kirk thanked all of the participants for their time and participation. The Study Team was available for additional comments, discussion, and questions following the conclusion of the Charrette.

### **3.0 BREAKOUT GROUP RESULTS**

This section presents the results from each breakout group.

#### **3.1 Group A Results**

Group Members:

<b>Facilitator:</b>	Paul Hershkowitz	WSA
<b>MDOT Representative:</b>	Larry Young	
<b>Members:</b>	Dana Pionke,	GSA
	Garry Bullock,	SEMCOG
	Michele Thiesen,	BCBP
	Tom Hutka,	City of Port Huron
	Tony Taube,	FDA
	L.C. Knight,	APHIS - Vet Services

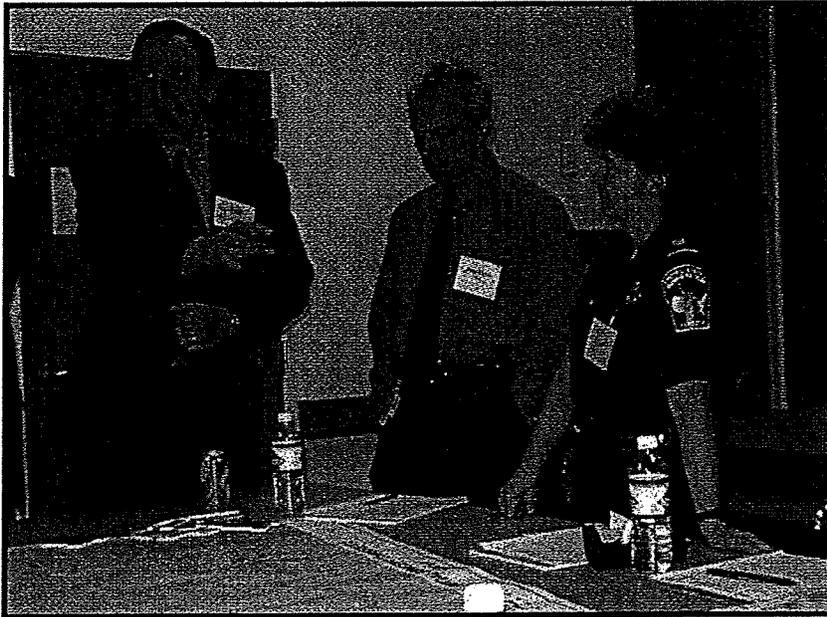
Objectives Assigned:

**Minimize backups on Highway 402 and I-94/69.**

- Routine 2 to 3 mile backups into Canada
- Backups create conflicts with local traffic
- Inadequate parking for trucks in Secondary Inspection
- Truck volumes peak during daylight hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday
- Passenger vehicles peak on Sunday afternoons

**Reduce vehicle and pedestrian conflicts on the plaza.**

- Conflicts between trucks and cars
- Clearer paths for pedestrians



**Figure 2 Group A**

Key Issues Identified:

- Access to downtown to minimize traffic impacts and encourage economic development
- Emergency Vehicle Access to the Plaza (Controlled Access?)
- Reduce/eliminate I-94/69 and Highway 402 backup to Plaza and local roads
  - Eliminate Commercial Weave on Bridge/Plaza
  - Secondary Inspection Off-site to increase space on Plaza and reduce other inspection times
- Toll/Inspection – Flexible to work for both commercial/passenger vehicles
- Minimize the required amount of new elevated plaza
- Flexible design
- Flexible inbound Primary booths to work for cars or trucks

Summary of Concept Developed:

- Commercial Primary to be located at right hand side and layed out using a staggered approach
- Toll also staggered
- Duty Free adjacent to small main building for registrants etc.
- Local access from I-94/69 to Pine Grove Ave. on the south side of the plaza
- Secondary Commercial Inspection facility to be located parallel to Pine Grove Ave. leaving space for future expansion
- Vet Services to be located on-site in overflow parking lot to the north of plaza
- Dedicated walkway between the toll booths and administration building
- Some high-low booth usage

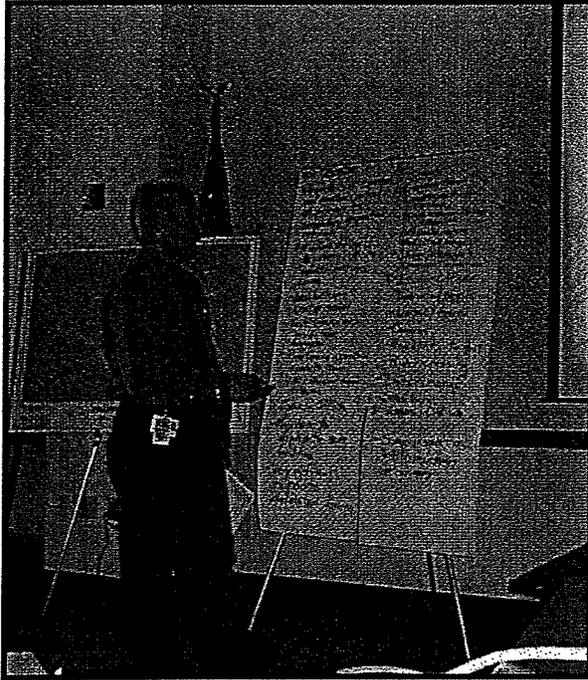


Figure 3 Tony Taube Presents for Group A

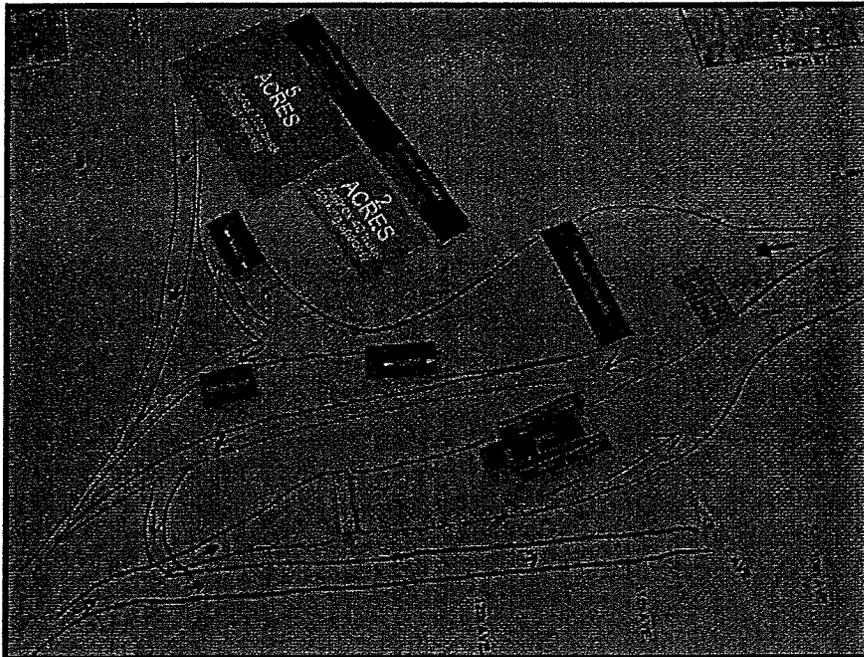


Figure 4 Group A - Concept

### 3.2 Group B

Group Members:

<b>Facilitator:</b>	Chris Nazar	WSA
<b>MDOT Representative:</b>	Jeff Edwards	
<b>Members:</b>	Tony Mabrey, Kim Harmer, Joe Lopetrone, Dan Miller, Greta Budweg, Ken Tolksdorf,	FedEx City of Port Huron BWBA GSA FDA BCBP

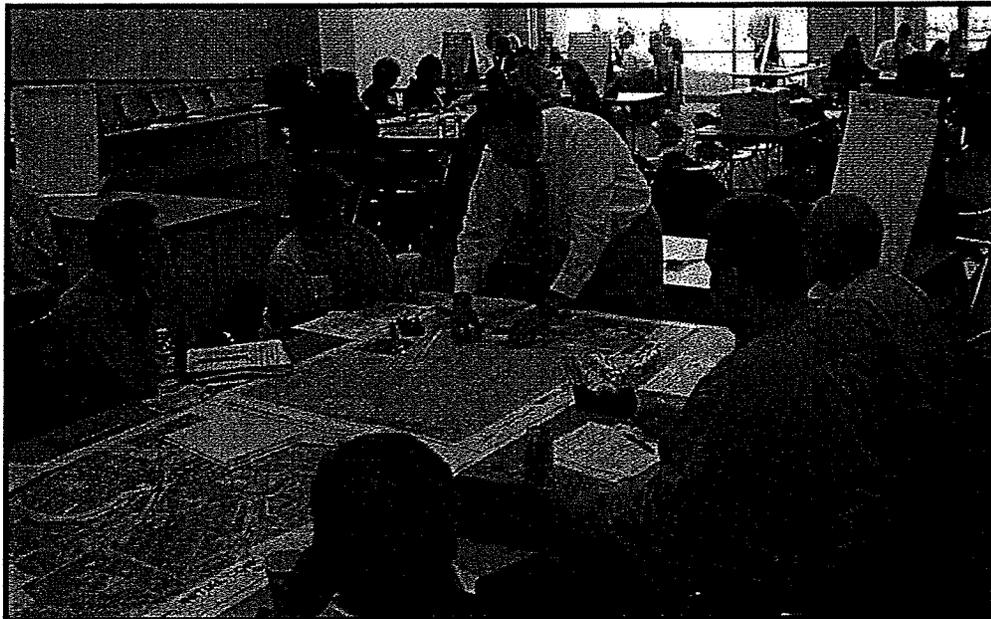


Figure 5 Group B

Objectives Assigned:

**Accommodate projected 30-year traffic growth and potential future plaza facility needs.**

- The number of trucks entering U.S. via the Blue Water Bridge grew 150% between 1990 and 2002
- Truck traffic is forecast to grow an additional 146% between 2002 and 2030
- Passenger traffic is forecast to grow 71% between 2002 and 2030

**Reduce weave movements on the bridge, plaza, and I-94/69.**

- Inspection of trucks on the right side of the plaza
- Reduce weave movements on the plaza
- No left entrances onto I-94/69

Key Issues Identified:

**Outcomes**

- No more weaves / reduce backups
- Facilitate FAST
- Exit control
- Local Access to I-94 to Pine Grove Ave.
- Separation of truck and passenger traffic off of the bridge
- Duty free access
- Additional truck parking underneath elevated sections
- Consolidation of USDA and FDA at Secondary Commercial Inspection

**Discussion**

- If weave is fixed, center lane could be 'FAST' lane, but this would leave only one lane for other trucks
- Signs don't work for dealing with the mid-bridge weave
- One customs facility would help reduce weave instead of two buildings
- Reducing weave is part of addressing the backup
- Diversion of trucks is an issue
- Two weaves – trucks left and cars right
- Canada acted quickly to get vehicles to weave at slow speeds with a temporary barrier at the bottom of bridge on their plaza
- Weave inhibits NEXUS access, which will be an issue with 'FAST' lane dedication
- Commercial Primary on lower level (at grade) – done at Fort St. in Detroit
- Must have secure corridor – at grade allows for more exit control
- FAST could be elevated
- Keep main building where it is now?
- Main building underneath or on top of Primary Inspection

Summary of Concepts Developed:

- Commercial Primary to be located to the north side of the plaza
- Local access from I-94/69 to Pine Grove Ave. south of the plaza
- Staggered commercial/passenger processing
- Separated 'FAST' lane from Commercial Primary
- Expansion of elevated plaza area required
- Key is exit control
- Multi-level Commercial Secondary
  - Customs Brokers upstairs
- Plaza area crosses Hancock St.
- Separate access for passenger vehicles to the local road network.

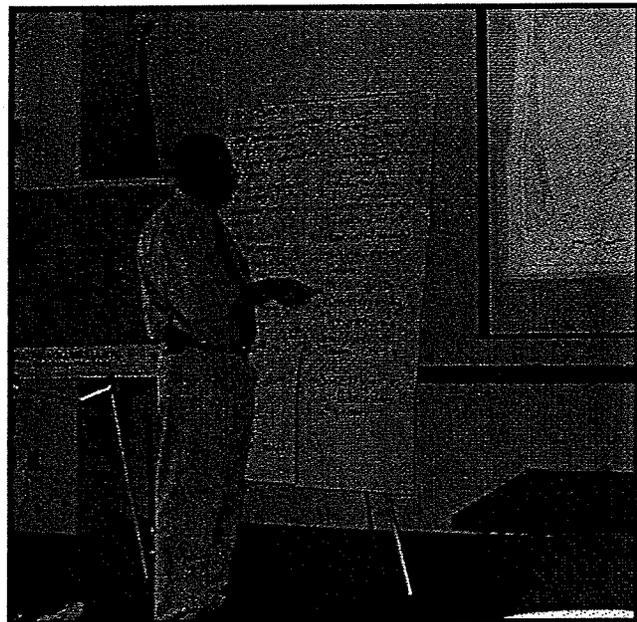


Figure 6 Tony Mabrey Presents for Group B

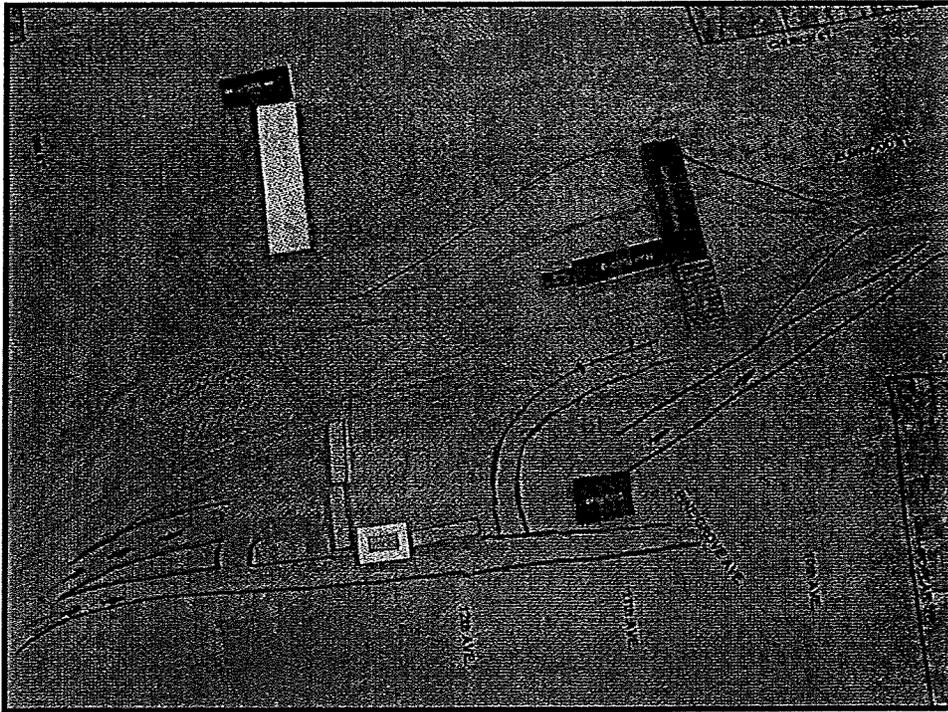


Figure 7 Group B - Concept 1

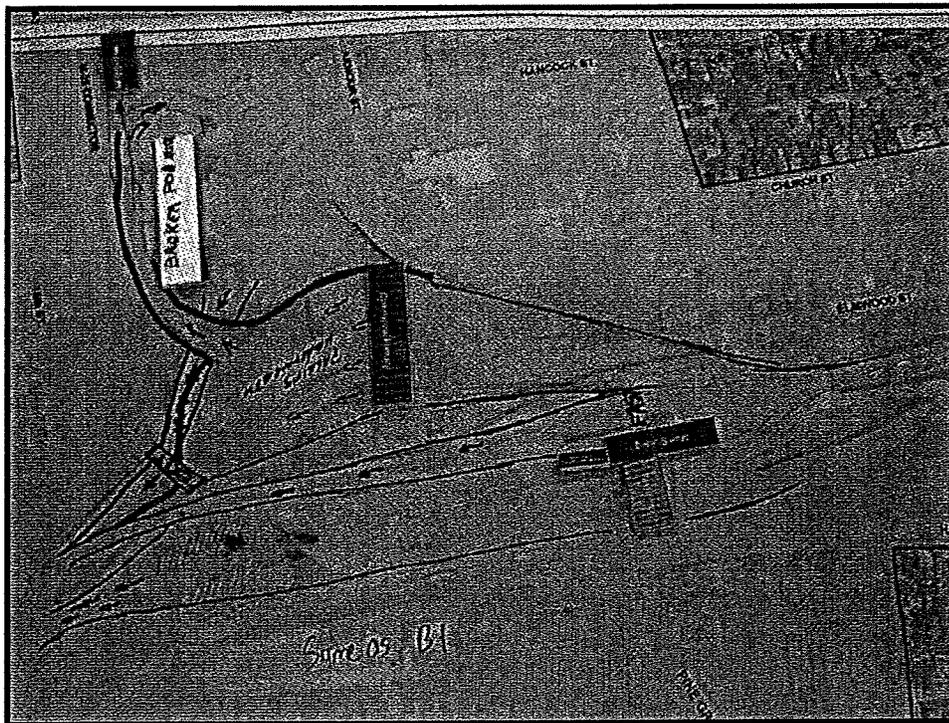


Figure 8 Group B - Concept 2

### 3.3 Group C

Group Members:

<b>Facilitator:</b>	Todd Davis	WSA
<b>MDOT Representative:</b>	Paige Williams	
<b>Members:</b>	Bob Clegg, Ken Jarvela, Judy Stroh, Elizabeth Brown, Marcy Jacobs,	City of Port Huron BWBA BCBP GSA A.N. Deringer

Objectives Assigned:

**Increase facility security and separate customs brokers and FAST/NEXUS enrollment from secure areas.**

- Office space for increased number of inspection officers
- Monitoring equipment
- Separation of secure and public uses

**Minimize routing of through commercial traffic to local roads during maintenance operations.**

- Two-lane exit ramps to avoid ramp closures during maintenance

Key Issues Identified:

- Eliminate the bridge weave – relocate Commercial Primary to right side
- Eliminate the backups
- Need increased capacity at Primary and Secondary

Summary of Concept Developed:

- Commercial Primary to be located to the north side of the plaza
- Local access from I-94/69 to Pine Grove Ave. on the south with free flowing access to Pine Grove Ave.
- Duty free to be located on west side of plaza before the toll booths
- Included outbound inspection
- Widened plaza substantially over Pine Grove Ave.
  - o Booths to be moved a little to the south with no staggering

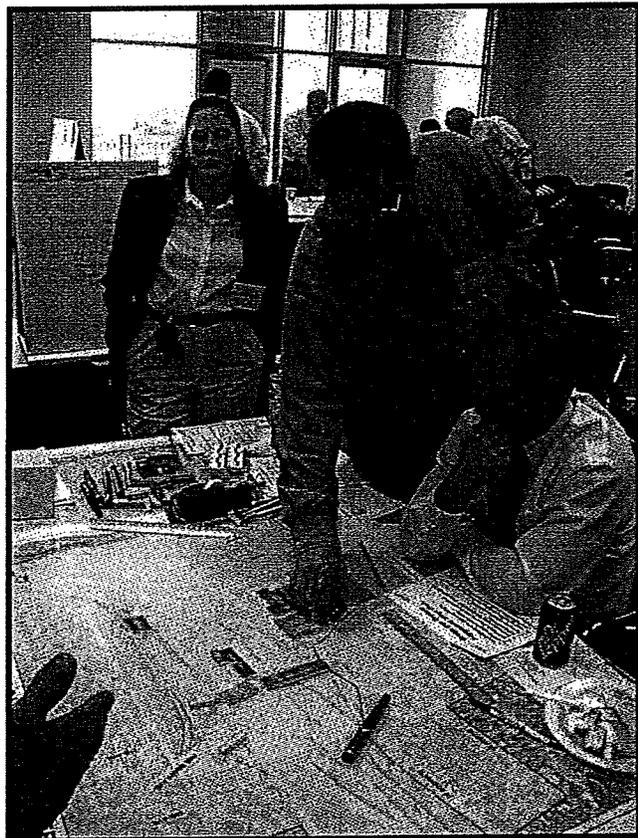


Figure 9 Group C

- The Pine Grove plaza entrance ramp to be reversed to allow local access from the plaza
- Vet services located on the plaza
- 'VACIS' to be located on far north of Commercial secondary for efficient staging

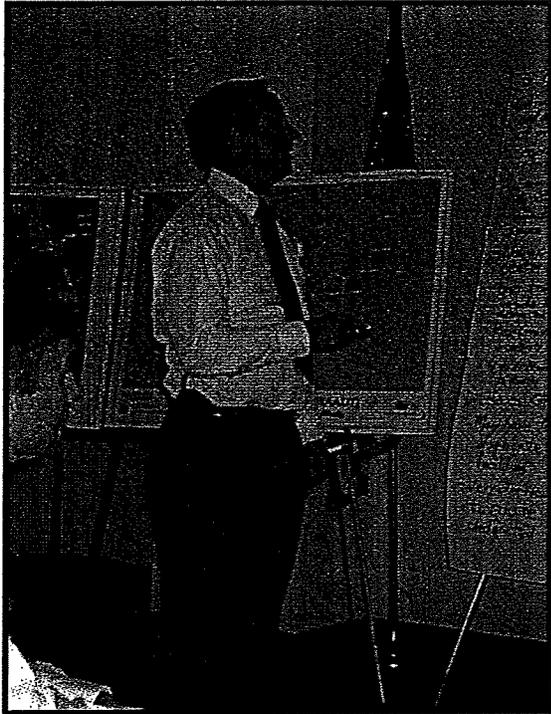


Figure 10 Bob Clegg Presents for Group C

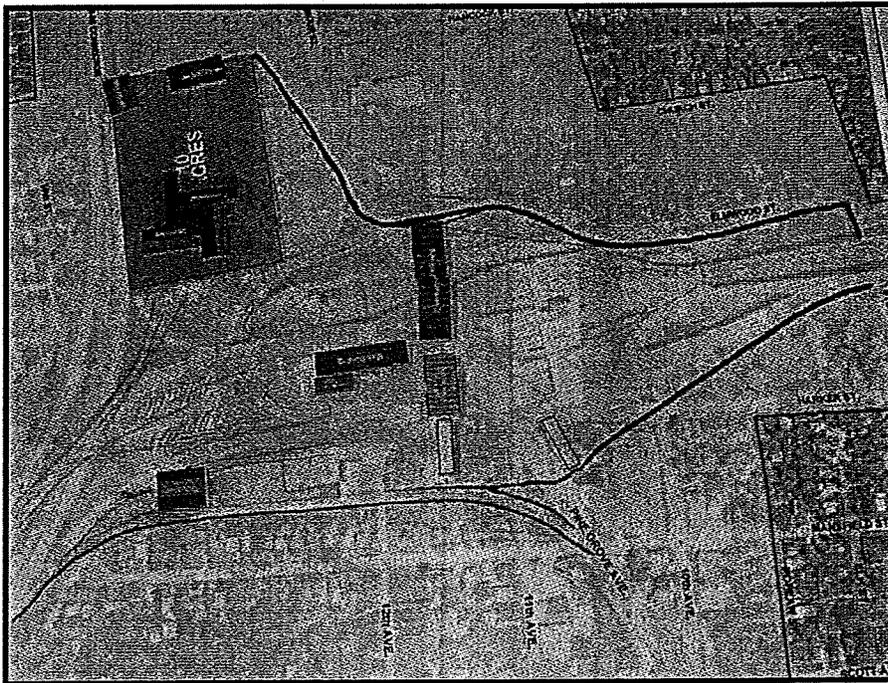


Figure 11 Group C - Concept

### 3.4 Group D

#### Group Members:

<b>Facilitator:</b>	Doug Lavoie	WSA
<b>MDOT Representative:</b>	Paul McAllister	
<b>Members:</b>	Bill Elliott,	CCRA
	Doug Plachcinski,	SCCOTS
	Brent Bouwens,	DHS
	Don Melcher,	GSA
	Robert Eick,	City of Port Huron
	Jane Graham,	BWBA

#### Objectives Assigned:

Provide exit control and maintain control of Primary to Secondary Inspection referrals.

- Sightlines
- Vehicle tracking

Please examine the use of the potential off-site inspection locations.

#### Key Issues Identified:

##### Plaza

- Emergency access and delivery issues to the plaza in addition to the general public
- Passenger and commercial access to downtown Port Huron to be kept separate (to and from)
- Off-site would require dedicated lanes
- Shift Passenger and Commercial Inspections
- The existing Welcome Center is under utilized which could be relocated onto the plaza
- FAST trucks on designated lane
- Pine Grove Ave. is a constraint and a security issue
- There is a 4:1 ratio of Passenger Primary to Passenger Secondary
- Need a location for Chambers of Commerce
- Potential for tolls to be located on the Canadian side

##### Off-site

- Dedicated lane(s)
- Walled/fenced
- Cameras
- No ability to exit
- Black River Crossing



Figure 12 Group D

- Interchange
- Send backs
- May have to duplicate some facilities
- Very difficult to route dedicated lane(s)
- Some inspection still necessary at Primary

Summary of Concepts Developed:

- Commercial Primary to be located to the north
- Welcome Center to be relocated on-site
- Local access to and from the plaza to be provided with a boulevard separating the ramps
- Duty free to be relocated to the right of the toll booths with a designated access point
- Commercial Secondary to be located to the north at grade level utilizing a multi level slope
- Truck and car access to be kept separate
- Access off M-25 for NEXUS/FAST application
- Entrance and exit from Commercial Secondary needs to be considered
- For Commercial Secondary located off-site, a multi-lane secured road should be provided with a separate bridge over Black River
- Concerned with ditching of loads for electronic surveillance technique
- The favored location for off-site Commercial Secondary is Water St.
- A tunnel or overpass should be used to cross Water St.
- There still needs to be some available space for emergency Secondary Inspection on-site



Figure 13 Robert Eick Presented for Group D

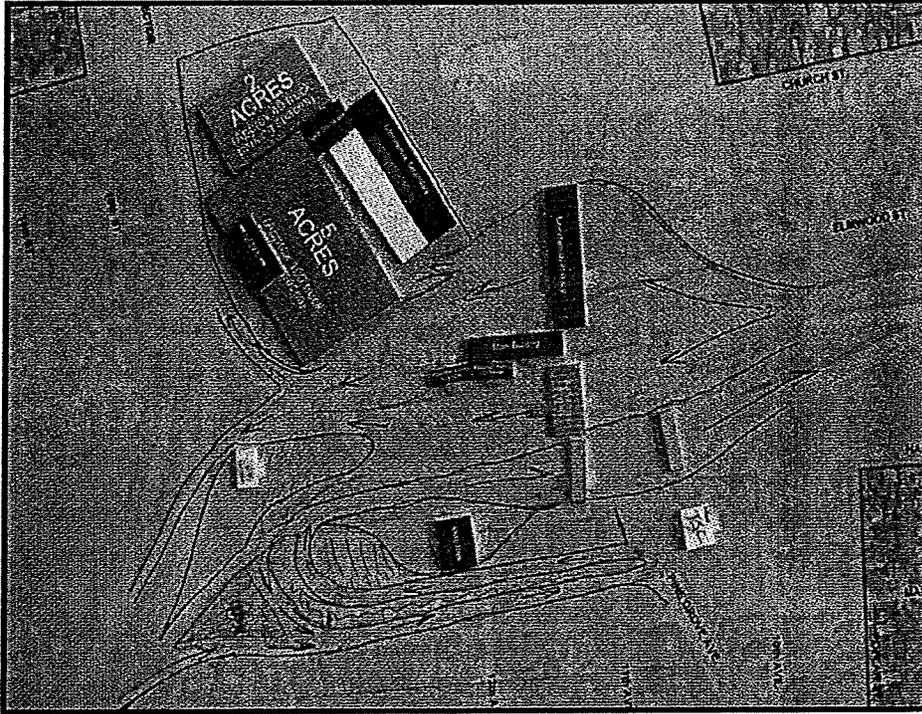


Figure 14 Group D - Concept 1



Figure 15 Group D - Concept 2

### 3.5 Group E

Group Members:

<b>Facilitator:</b>	Bill Holthoff	Sear-Brown
<b>MDOT Representative:</b>	Ed Waddell	
<b>Members:</b>	Keith Jasukaitis, William Corbett, Bruce Campbell, Robert Prause, Anndrea Greer,	FDA City of Port Huron BWBA BCBP GSA

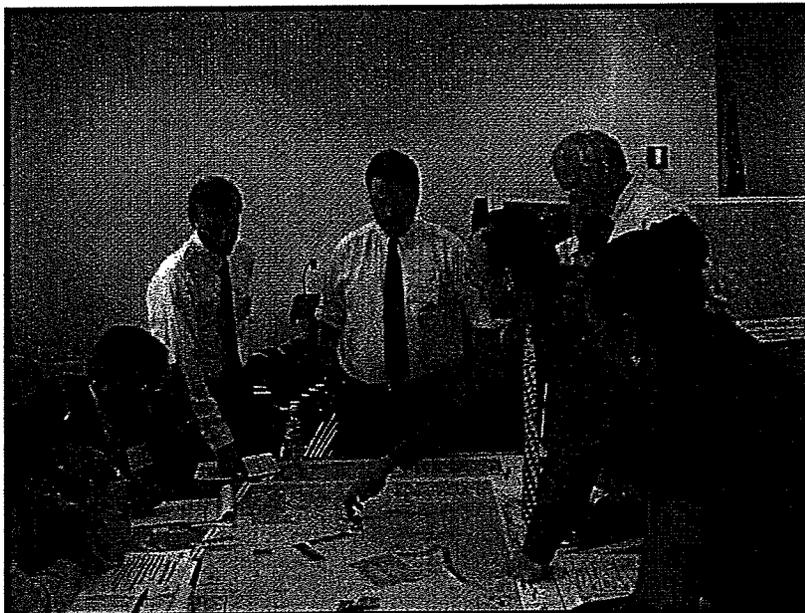


Figure 16 Group E

Objectives Assigned:

**Accommodate the latest inspection technologies and procedures.**

- Indoor Cargo Bays
- Radiation Detection Portals
- VACIS (Truck X-ray)
- Entry/Exit Program
- Outbound Inspection
- FAST (expedite commercial vehicles)
- ?????

**Improve local plaza and duty free access and reduce associated local traffic conflicts.**

- Access from plaza to Pine Grove Avenue and downtown Port Huron

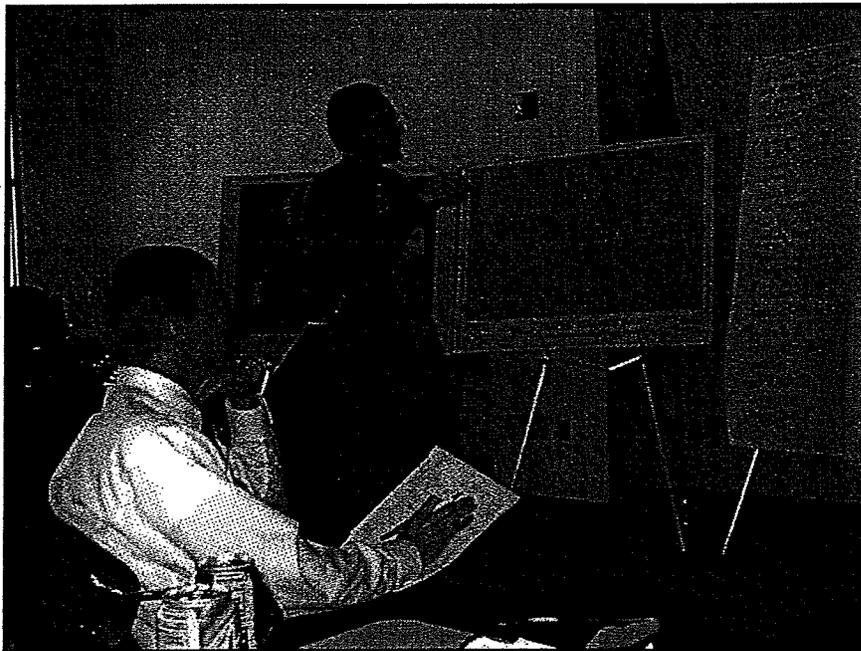
- Access to the St. Clair Riverfront
- More visible Duty Free presence

Key Issues Identified:

- Layout additional parking facilities for federal employees other than the main building
- Traffic control measures are important and what are the tax implications
- Access to downtown Port Huron for Homeland Security
- The M-25 Connector turning lane is too narrow at Hancock St. to store a school bus
- There is a high crash rate at Water St. interchange due to commercial development
- Service drive along the Black River Bridge

Summary of Concepts Developed:

- Commercial Primary to be located on the right
- Local access from I-94/69 to Pine Grove Ave. to be located on the south
- Commercial Secondary to be located on the plot north of the plaza with the building either centered or along Pine Grove Ave.
- Duty free to be located to the south side
- Two-way local access ramp to the south
- Passenger Primary to be split either side of the main building
- Accommodate outbound inspection



**Figure 17 Bruce Campbell Presents for Group E**

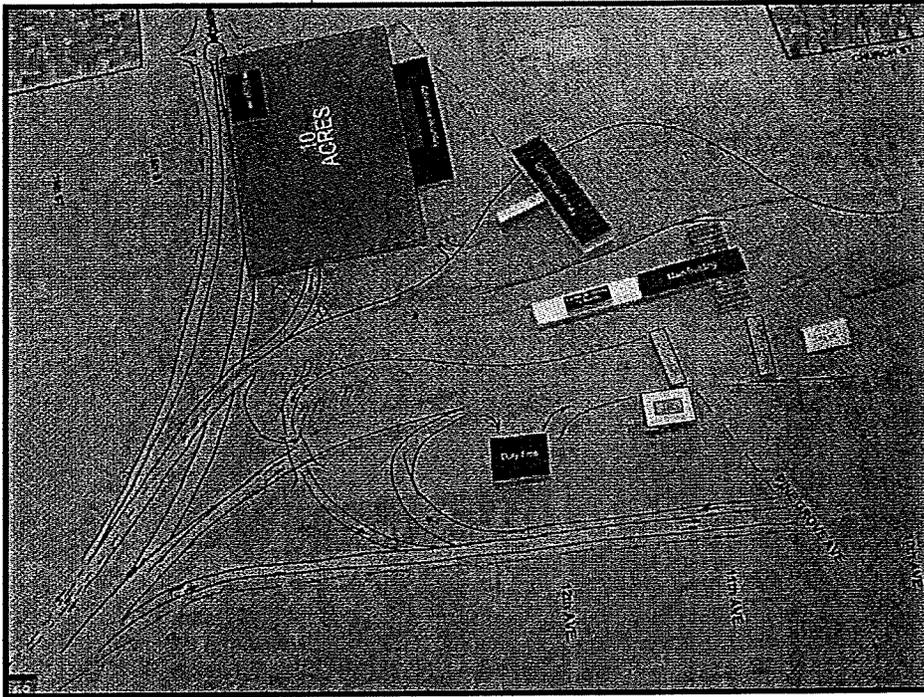


Figure 18 Group E - Concept 1

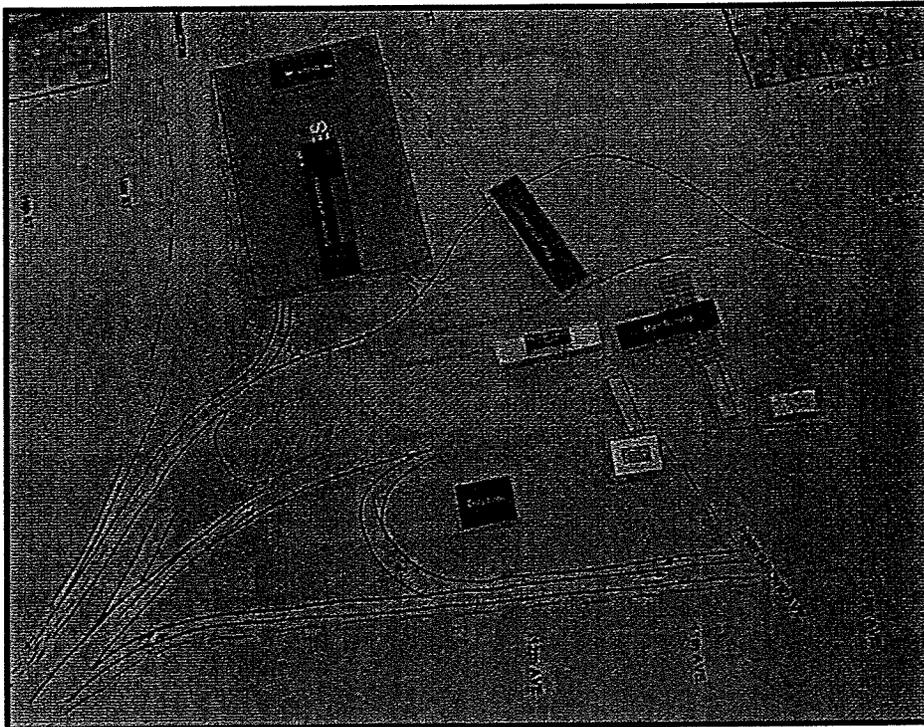


Figure 19 Group E - Concept 2

## 4.0 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The following sections provide a summary of the overall results from the Charrette.

### 4.1 Individual Group Ideas

#### Commercial Primary:

- Could be located on right hand side of plaza using a staggered layout
- Could be split either side of the main building

#### Commercial Secondary:

- Inspection facility could be located parallel to Pine Grove Ave. leaving space for future expansion and allowing access for local traffic for informational purposes
- Commercial Secondary could be located to the north at grade level utilizing a multi level slope
- A possible multi-level Commercial Secondary with Customs Brokers upstairs
- Parking could be located under the elevated plaza
- Exit control is key

#### Commercial Secondary (Off-site):

- A multi-lane secured road could be provided with a separate bridge over the Black River
- The favored location for off-site Commercial Secondary is Water St. because it is closer, which would reduce construction costs
- There needs to be some available space for emergency Secondary Inspection on-site

#### Duty Free:

- Could be located adjacent to the main building for access from both eastbound and westbound
- Could be located on west side of plaza before the toll booths

#### Other Facilities:

- Vet Services could be located on-site in overflow parking lot to the north of plaza
- VACIS could be located on far north of Commercial Secondary for efficient staging
- FAST lane could be separated from Commercial Primary
- Welcome Center could be relocated on the plaza
- Access Off M-25 for NEXUS/FAST application
- A dedicated walkway between toll booths and main building

#### Plaza Location:

- Commercial Secondary Inspection on the block bounded by the plaza, Pine Grove Ave., Hancock St., and the M-25 Connector
- MDOT property to the east of 10th Ave.
- Expand to north of Hancock St.

- Widened plaza over Pine Grove Ave.

Local access from I-94/69 to Pine Grove Ave:

- South of plaza
- Possible free flowing access to Pine Grove Ave.
- Could use a boulevard to separate the ramps
- Could include a separate access for passenger vehicles to the local road network
- The Pine Grove plaza entrance ramp could be reversed to allow local access from the plaza

## **4.2 Similarities in Concepts Developed**

- Commercial Primary on the north to eliminate the weave movement on the bridge
- Local access between I-94/69 and Pine Grove Avenue to the south
- Commercial Secondary to the north of the existing plaza
- Relocation of duty free near to the tolls on the south
- All involved some widening of the plaza over Pine Grove Ave.

## **4.3 Differences in Concepts Developed**

- Some Groups separated plaza/local access for cars and trucks
- Local access from the plaza to Pine Grove Ave. not included in all submissions
- Not all groups had clear exit control at Commercial Secondary
- Some alternatives staggered Primary Inspection
- Group D relocated the Welcome Center onto the plaza area
- Group B separated FAST lanes from regular Commercial Primary lanes
- Group B used the plot of land north of Hancock St.
- The alternative layouts for Commercial Secondary Inspection were both utilized by different groups.
- Group E split Passenger Primary around the main building
- Group E had special outbound customs facilities

## **5.0 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE STEPS**

Members of the Study Team felt that the Charrette was a very worthwhile exercise and produced the desired result of increasing understanding among project stakeholders. The Charrette participants also identified several key ideas which will be incorporated into the development of alternatives for improving the plaza.

Following the Charrette, the Study Team began development of the Illustrative Alternatives. The Illustrative Alternatives will take into account the outcomes of the Charrette, but as stated during the Charrette, no specific Illustrative Alternative may directly reflect all of the attributes of a particular concept developed on that day. Instead, varying aspects and ideas from the different concepts will be woven into the variety of Illustrative Alternatives developed. Additional concepts not identified during the Charrette may also be developed as part of the Illustrative Alternatives to account for a full variety of land use and plaza circulation options in the alternatives development process. The Study Team looks forward to presenting the Illustrative Alternatives to the Advisory Committee at a future meeting.



# Federal Emergency Management Agency

Region V

536 South Clark Street, 6th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60605-1521

June 4, 2003

**File Copy**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Paul McAllister  
Environmental Section  
State of Michigan  
Department of Transportation  
Murray D. Van Wagoner Building  
P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Subject: Blue Water Bridge Plaza Study, Request for Environmental Scoping  
Comments

Dear Mr. McAllister:

We have received the above-referenced Request for Comments addressed to former Regional Director Dale W. Shipley. Please correct your records to reflect the name of our new Regional Director, Mr. Edward G. Buikema.

We have no objection to the proposed action. This office administers and coordinates the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) floodplain management, risk assessment, and mitigation activities for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The Request for Comments includes floodplain maps for the City of Port Huron and the Technical Memorandum in the Scoping Information Package explains possible floodplain impacts of the various alternative actions. The City of Port Huron participates in the NFIP and issues floodplain development permits if proposed developments comply with its adopted floodplain management resolution. Additionally, the State of Michigan, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), also issues permits for certain activities in floodplains under State jurisdiction. This includes Lake St. Clair, the Detroit River, Lake Huron, the St. Clair River, Stocks Creek, and the Black River.

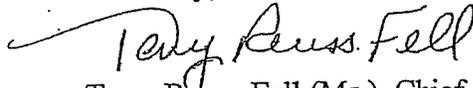
If the chosen alternative takes place in the base, or one per cent annual chance (the so-called "100-year") floodplain, the city should apply its floodplain management rules and refer the project sponsor to the DEQ. Once the DEQ determines its authority and takes the appropriate permit action, the city may apply its permit performance standards. Even if a floodplain is not negatively impacted, any *federal* action must comply with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management. The Executive Order requires federal agencies taking any actions (permitting, funding, building) in the base floodplain to avoid the

floodplain unless there are no practicable alternatives. In determining alternatives to taking an action in the floodplain, an eight-step public review and mitigation process must be followed in accordance with the Order's specifications. We can provide specific guidance if requested to do so, but we believe MDOT has the necessary guidance from the USDOT.

One of the proposed actions may include changes to the Interstate 94-69 bridge. If this action is chosen and moves forward, the sponsor must perform hydraulic engineering studies to determine whether the changes (principally cross-section geometry) will affect the base flood. If they will, the sponsor must provide the city with the engineering data necessary to request this agency revise the currently effective Flood Insurance Study for the City of Port Huron.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact David Schein, Senior Program Manager, on 312.408.5539, or at [david.schein@dhs.gov](mailto:david.schein@dhs.gov).

Sincerely,



Terry Reuss Fell (Ms.), Chief  
Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Branch

Cc: City of Port Huron Building Dept.  
Les Thomas, MiDEQ



City of Port Huron 100 McMorran Boulevard Port Huron, Michigan 48060

Office of City Engineer

(810) 984-9730

www.porthuron.org

August 21, 2003

Mr. Kris Wisniewski  
MDOT Project Manager  
Michigan Department of Transportation  
425 W. Ottawa Street  
P. O. Box 30050  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Mr. Wisniewski:

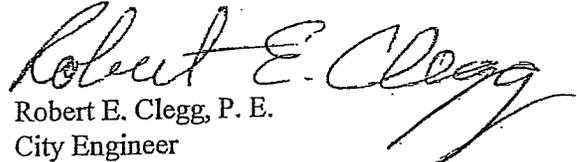
We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the illustrative alternatives for the design of the Blue Water Bridge Plaza. We would like to express that we appreciate the creativity you have shown in trying to solve this difficult design. We especially liked alternative 11 because of its minimal impact to City owned private property and access to the City. This alternative is only acceptable if on and off ramps are included for convenient movements to north and south bound Pine Grove.

We would like to express a concern that for several of the proposed alternatives the eastbound exit from the I69/I94 corridor to downtown Port Huron appears to be not included as part of the project. After all of the comments made at the Initial Concepts Charrette we would have expected that access from the plaza/bridge to Pine Grove Avenue for east and west bound traffic would be included in all illustrative alternatives. Access to/from this corridor is important to the revitalizing of our downtown and the city in general. The City's professionals within the Planning, Police, Fire, and Public Works Department agree that this access is critical in any design alternative.

The Blue Water Bridge is a facility that greatly affects our community. The current plaza does not lend itself to good access to our community. This is unacceptable. We are looking forward to improvements in the future that will correct this deficiency.

Thank you again for including the City's comments in the construction of this important facility.

Sincerely,

  
Robert E. Clegg, P. E.  
City Engineer



Thomas J. Hutka, P. E.  
City Manager

October 13, 2003

Mr. Bob Parsons, Public Hearing Officer  
Michigan Department of Transportation  
425 West Ottawa Street  
P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

**File Copy**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Re: U.S. Plaza at the Blue Water Bridge Illustrative  
Alternatives Public Meeting

Dear Mr. Parsons:

We were pleased with the presentations at the September 23, 2003 public meeting for the subject project.

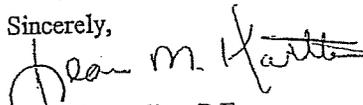
We have carefully reviewed the various plaza alternatives and the evaluation matrix presented at the meeting and offer a number of comments in the attached *Blue Water Bridge Authority Comments U.S. Plaza Study - Illustrative Alternatives* dated October 13, 2003. We offer these comments as part of the public meeting process to identify key concerns pertaining to the U.S. Plaza improvement project.

As provided in the attached document, we have identified a number of key concerns. One of the primary concerns is the need to address the westbound vehicular queuing conditions such that queuing does not extend across the bridge and onto 402. The issue of queuing is also imperative as pertains to the effectiveness of dedicated lanes for FAST/NEXUS. We understand that definitive analyses of queuing conditions are contingent on the completion of the traffic projections. However, based on the review of the alternatives, some alternatives fair better than others in regards to queuing conditions with Alternative F providing the best queuing conditions.

Our review identified Alternatives B and C as poor performers in regards to a number of the tests for project purpose and need. We believe that these alternatives should not advance to additional study. We also believe that Alternative F was the best performer in regards to the presented evaluation criteria, and we strongly support the advancement of this alternative to the next level of study.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments pertaining to this project. Should you have any questions pertaining to the attached, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,

  
Jean M. Hartline, P.E.  
Senior Transportation Engineer

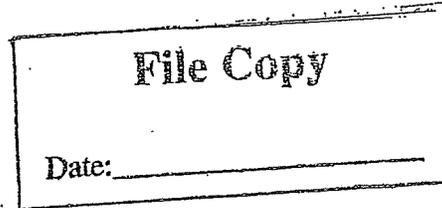
- c:
- Mr. Kris Wisniewski, Special Binational Policy, MDOT with attachments
  - Mr. Apul McAllister, NEPA Compliance, MDOT with attachments
  - Mr. Todd J. Davis, Manager Env/Transportation Services, WSA, with attachments
  - Mr. Chris Nazer, Transportation Planner, WSA, with attachments
  - Mr. Kirk Haybarker, AICP, Regional Director of Environmental Services, WSA with attachments
  - Mr. James J. Steele, P.E. Division Administrator, FHWA with attachments
  - Mr. Thomas Fudaly, Engineering and Operations Manager, FHWA with attachments
  - Ms. Ruth E. Hepfer, Area Engineer, FHWA with attachments
  - Mr. Dan Elash, BWBA with attachments
  - Mr. Ted Gibson, BWBA with attachments



# MICHIGAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

October 22, 2003

Paul McAllister  
Project Manager  
Blue Water Bridge Plaza Study  
MDOT' Bureau of Transportation Planning  
P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, MI 48909

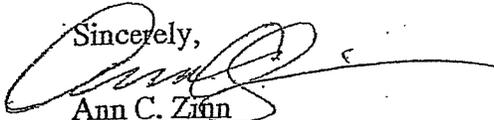


Dear Mr. McAllister,

The Michigan Archaeological Society would like to continue to be included as a consulting party to participate in the Blue Water Bridge Plaza Study in Port Huron, Michigan.

Please note that the letter of August 4, 2003, clearly stated "If you wish to not participate in this process...please respond in writing to the address above." Because of this we assumed we were included unless we declined, and therefore did not need to respond. Sorry for the misunderstanding and delay.

Sincerely,



Ann C. Zinn  
President, Michigan Archaeological Society  
11100 S. Fairlane Drive  
South Lyon, MI 48178

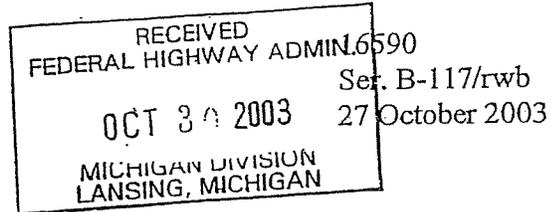
U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security

United States  
Coast Guard

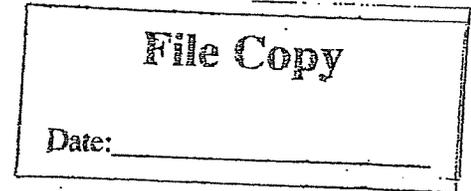


Commander (abr)  
Ninth Coast Guard District  
1240 E. Ninth Street, Room 2019  
Cleveland, OH 44199-2060

Phone: (216) 902-6084  
FAX: (216) 902-6088



Mr. Abdelmoez A. Abdalla  
Environmental Program Manager  
Federal Highway Administration  
Michigan Division  
315 West Allegan Street - Room 207  
Lansing, Michigan 48933



Dear Mr. Abdalla:

This refers to your letter of 22 October 2003 concerning potential improvements to the Blue Water Bridge Plaza.

The subject of the study is a matter not under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard Bridge Administration Program. If a new bridge were being proposed for construction, plaza locations, etc. would be a part of the permit process and addressed accordingly by the Coast Guard. However, in cases like this where work is being proposed outside the confines of the bridge structure, the Coast Guard has no permit requirements and is not involved with any environmental processes.

Thank you for advisement and requesting our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert W. Bloom, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

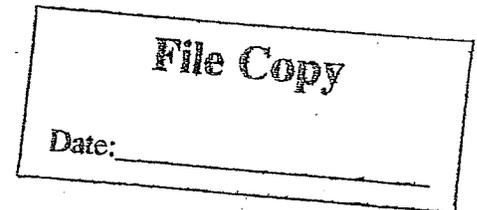
ROBERT W. BLOOM, JR.  
Chief, Bridge Branch  
By direction of Commander,  
Ninth Coast Guard District



GSA Great Lakes Region

OCT 31 2003

Mr. Abdelmoez A. Abdalla  
Environmental Program Manager  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration  
Michigan Division  
315 West Allegan Street, Room 207  
Lansing, MI 48933



Subject: Request to Become a Cooperating Agency,  
Proposed Blue Water Bridge Study,  
St. Clair County, Michigan

Dear Mr. Abdalla,

I am writing in response to your letter dated October 10, 2003 wherein you request that General Services Administration (GSA) become a Cooperating Agency with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in the development of an environmental assessment for the subject project. You may be aware that GSA has been participating in the Public Sector Advisory sessions at the invitation of the Michigan Department of Transportation since September 2002.

GSA welcomes your request, and agrees to become a Cooperating Agency on the proposed project. The concepts of GSA's involvement you describe in your letter are agreeable as well. Should you require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or have a member of your staff contact Donald Melcher, Project Manager, at (312) 353-1237.

Sincerely,

  
JAMES C. HANDLEY  
Regional Administrator

U.S. General Services Administration  
230 South Dearborn Street  
Chicago, IL 60604-1696  
www.gsa.gov



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 5  
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD  
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

NOV 24 2003

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

B-19J

Mr. Abdelmoez A. Abdalla  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration  
315 West Allegan Street, Room 207  
Lansing, Michigan 48933

**File Copy**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Re: Cooperating Agency Request Regarding the Proposed Blue Water Bridge Study, St. Clair County, Michigan

Dear Mr. Abdalla:

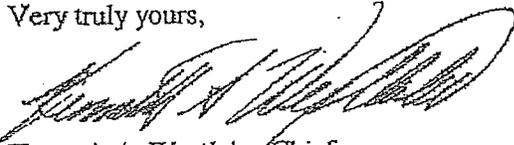
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has received your letter dated October 22, 2003, in which the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) offered U.S. EPA an opportunity to serve as a Cooperating Agency on this project. As of now, your Agency anticipates developing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project as the appropriate level of documentation required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

As a cooperating agency, U.S. EPA agrees to provide project-related input on our areas of expertise during the EA development process. We agree to the three types of tasks outlined in your October 22, 2003-letter. Specifically, you asked us to provide early input, participate in coordination meetings, and review preliminary copies of documents. For further clarification, I would like to make the following points. U.S. EPA retains its independent review and comment function under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. We agree to participate as a Cooperating Agency with the hope that U.S. EPA's concerns will be addressed through the project development process to the maximum extent possible.

We are committed to working together with FHWA on this important project because of its importance as an international transportation corridor and because of its similarity to the Canada-US-Ontario-Michigan Border Transportation Planning/Need Feasibility Study. We have reviewed the Technical Memorandums for Scoping and Purpose and Need and we have no comments at this time. We look forward to getting more detailed information about the Illustrative alternatives.

Thank you for providing us this opportunity. If you have any questions, please call Sherry Kamke of my staff at 312-353-5794.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth A. Westlake". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Kenneth A. Westlake, Chief  
Environmental Planning and Evaluation Branch  
Office of Strategic Environmental Analysis



# Port Huron Area School District

William D. Kimball, Superintendent  
1925 Lapeer Ave. • P.O. Box 5013 • Port Huron, MI 48061-5013 • (810) 984-3101

November 26, 2003

**File Copy**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Chris Nazar, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner  
Wilbur Smith Associates  
6709 Centurion Drive, Suite 220  
Lansing, MI 48917

Dear Mr. Nazar:

It was a pleasure to meet with you regarding the proposed bridge plaza expansion and the bridge over Black River. You provided valuable information which further clarified and focused our concerns regarding the safe and timely transporting of our students. As you may recall, our buses travel across the Black River expressway bridge nearly one hundred times per day. Completely closing this bridge would create major transportation problems.

Enclosed please find **Exhibit A**, which lists the name, address and telephone number of schools, and **Exhibit B-1 & B-2**, which list the elementary and middle schools and their student population that are within an estimated one-mile radius from either location. The buildings are marked **CP** for current plaza or **PHT** for the proposed plaza in Port Huron Township.

If you need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Beedon, Executive Director for  
Board and Curriculum Services

Enclosures

RCB/jss

c: W. Kimball

December 9, 2003

Mr. Bob Parsons, Public Hearing Officer  
Michigan Department of Transportation  
425 West Ottawa Street  
P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Re: Blue Water Bridge US Plaza Study Purpose and  
Need Statement

Dear Mr. Parsons:

This letter is written to provide comments regarding the *Technical Memorandum Purpose and Need Statement*, dated October 16, 2003, for the Blue Water Bridge Plaza Study in St. Clair County, Michigan (MDOT J.N. 57779).

The Blue Water Bridge Authority (BWBA) reviewed the document and offers the comments herein relative to several core issues for the project Purpose and Need Statement.

The Purpose and Need Statement identified "the reduction of weaves on the bridge, plaza and I-69/94". The three distinct weave areas (on the bridge, on the plaza, and on I-69/94) should be separated into three purpose and need items. The current wording of *reducing* the weave on the bridge, while a step in the right direction relative to the existing condition, must be strengthened to address the long-term safety and capacity issues relative to the Blue Water Bridge Gateway. We would suggest that the wording identify that "eliminate the need for any heavy vehicle to weave on the bridge." In reference to the other two weave conditions involving the plaza and I-69/94, the use of "reduction" may remain applicable as total elimination of weaves on the plaza or on I-69/94 may not be feasible. The occurrence of these weaves on the plaza and on I-69/94 should involve minimal movement relevant to traffic volumes, should have adequate weave area, and should have adequate capacity or level of service (based on standard analysis techniques).

The March 12, 2003 report entitled *Key Canadian Elements to be Considered in Developing a Purpose and Need Statement for the Blue Water Bridge Gateway, U.S. Plaza Study* outlined several of the BWBA's criteria requested to be included in the Purpose and Need Statement. The report discussed in detail the elimination of the weaves on the bridge, plaza, and I-69/94 from safety, engineering, and legal viewpoints.

By U.S. Federal Law, the Purpose and Need Statement must follow the guidelines set forth in the Federal Highway Administration's NEPA project development process. The NEPA process requires the agencies to balance the transportation decision making to take into account the potential impacts on the human and natural resources and the public's need for safe and efficient transportation improvements. Transportation planning and project development must reflect the desires of stakeholders such as the BWBA, and take into consideration the influence on both the natural and human environments. The needs of both communities on the approaches to the Blue Water Bridge and the desire to provide safe and efficient transportation operations on the bridge require the elimination of the need for the weaving of heavy vehicles on the bridge.

As outlined in the March 12, 2003 report, the BWBA voiced concerns regarding the draft objectives set forth by the Michigan Blue Water Bridge Plaza Advisory Committee for the Purpose and Need Statement. One of the draft objectives was to "reduce the weave movement on the bridge, plaza, and I-69/94." We continue to firmly believe the word "reduce" does not go far enough to solve the issues that currently exist and would not only violate the NEPA doctrine but would be viewed as shortsighted by members of the Advisory Committee.



It should be noted the existing concrete merging barrier on the Canadian side for westbound traffic is a temporary measure installed to address the weaving of heavy vehicles in the westbound direction. This barrier is not an adequate long-term solution to the weave issue on the bridge.

The BWBA also has concerns related to the traffic projections provided in the Purpose and Need Statement. When developing a Purpose and Need Statement, it is recommended by FHWA that all of the elements that are relevant to the project be as fully developed as possible and utilize as specific data as possible to compare the present, future no-build, and future build conditions. Data should be presented on such factors as reduction in vehicle hours of travel, improvements in travel speeds on the system, reduction in traffic accidents, injuries and fatalities, savings in cost to the traveling public, enhanced economic development potential, etc.

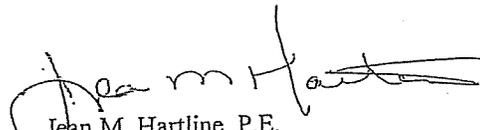
While accident statistics were discussed in the Purpose and Need Statement, the traffic projections related to many of the other factors are still in a raw format and have not been certified for the project. The certified traffic for the project will be based on traffic data model runs for the local area and take into account future traffic, population, and workplace growth for the region. The certified traffic demands will help define reasonable alternatives and products from the transportation planning process. The Purpose and Need Statement will require updating to reflect the results of the traffic projection when such are available.

It should be noted that in the past three (3) months there has been a spike in the eastbound plaza traffic. This item is brought up to shed light on the need for the traffic data for this project to be as complete and thorough as possible early in the project review to address the future bridge demands. Once again, it is recommended in the FHWA guidelines to be as comprehensive and specific as possible in the Purpose and Need Statement.

We recommend the Purpose and Need Statement be modified to reflect the above comments by the BWBA regarding the weaving and certified traffic issues. These issues are core to the success of the project to meet the future traffic needs of the Blue Water Bridge Gateway.

We appreciate the opportunity to review the Purpose and Need Statement. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,



Jean M. Hartline, P.E.  
Senior Transportation Engineer

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