

# NOTICE OF STEP-DOWN

## Detailed Design and Class Environmental Assessment Study Highway 401 Reconstruction, Municipality of Chatham-Kent, County of Essex Project Reference: G.W.P. 3091-12-00

The Ontario **Ministry of Transportation** has completed the Detailed Design and Class Environmental Study for the proposed improvements on Highway 401 from Victoria Road to 5 km west of Kent Bridge Road and from 5 km east of Bloomfield Road to Essex Road 42 in the Municipality of Chatham-Kent and the County of Essex, as shown on the key plan.

### THE PROJECT

The improvements to Highway 401 are required to replace the 50-year old deteriorating underlying concrete pavement layer (which is below several layers of asphalt) and includes the following:

- Approximately 50 km of full depth pavement reconstruction;
- Drainage improvements (ditching, culverts, sewers, field tiles, etc.);
- Replacement/rehabilitation of bridges and culverts; and
- Environmental protection and mitigation, where required.

This study covers a long section of Highway 401 and therefore the proposed improvements will be divided into separate construction phases. Construction of the first phase, from just east of Essex Road 42 interchange to the Merlin Road underpass, westbound lanes only, is expected to begin in the spring of 2015, subject to funding and approvals. Additional information and updates are available on the project website at [www.hwy401reconstruction.ca](http://www.hwy401reconstruction.ca).

### CONCURRENT OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT

In response to feedback from the community regarding the median, an operational assessment is currently being completed to determine whether enhancements beyond the current scope of this project are warranted along Highway 401 in Chatham-Kent.

The results of this assessment will be ready in Spring 2015 and will be published on the project website for public review and comment.

### THE PROCESS

This study was initiated as a Group 'B' project in accordance with the *Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Transportation Facilities* (2000) (MTO Class EA). A Public Information Centre (PIC) was held on Thursday, December 11, 2014 to provide an opportunity for the public to review the recommendations, and construction staging and traffic management plans. These are available on the project website.

Based on information collected and comments received during the screening process, it has been determined that this project will not result in any significant adverse environmental effects. Therefore this project is eligible to be stepped down from a Group 'B' to a Group 'C' project and an Environmental Screening Document will be prepared to document the improvements related to each construction phase. These reports will be maintained on file with MTO.

### COMMENTS

This notification marks the beginning of the 30-day review period in which affected parties may request to MTO that the project remain a Group 'B' project. If no objections are received by **February 6, 2015**, the project will be stepped down to a Group 'C' project.

Public consultation is very important and will continue through direct correspondence with the project team. We welcome your feedback and request comments by February 6, 2015.

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Information collected will be used in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record. If you have any accessibility requirements in order to participate in the project, please contact one of the Project Team members listed above.

Version française disponible en composant le 905 381-3224, (Tim).

