

BORDERS AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT

Windsor-Detroit Border Crossing Solution – Schwartz Report

(Submitted by Windsor & District Chamber of Commerce)

Issue:

The significant economic impact of continued delays at the Windsor-Detroit border crossings demand coordinated action by all levels of government to facilitate the efficient movement of goods and people through this vital economic gateway.

Background:

According to a recent study conducted by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, both Canadian and American economies are losing a staggering \$13.6 billion annually due to border delays.

Sam Schwartz Engineering PLLC (SSC) was retained by the City of Windsor to provide recommendations on how to address both commercial and passenger traffic issues as they relate to the Windsor-Detroit strategic border crossings.

The business community, including the Windsor & District Chamber of Commerce, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturer's Association and the Canadian Automotive Partnership Council (CAPC), has overwhelmingly endorsed the Schwartz Report.

From a Chambers of Commerce perspective, the Schwartz Report is a positive step in identifying viable options to address the Windsor-Detroit border bottlenecks. Most importantly, the report has garnered broad support with residents and the business community of the City of Windsor and the region.

This is the first time that there is a significant consensus on a way forward. What is needed now is unified leadership to proceed with action to accommodate commercial and passenger traffic using the corridor. The recommendations recognize the need for immediate short-term solutions, which are compatible with the long-term recommendations of the "Bi-National" study. The report provides a balanced approach.

The approach, as recommended by Schwartz can serve as a platform for the infrastructure improvement plan offered by the federal and provincial levels of government. The positions presented provide for equality of residents while laying the foundation for investor confidence in sustained and new economic opportunities within the province of Ontario and Canada.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce urges the Governments of Ontario and Canada to:

1. Take action with the other levels of government to integrate the solutions identified in the Schwartz Report and commit to the required funding for the short-term and long-term solutions for this vital economic gateway for Ontario and the country.
2. Lead when it is appropriate an expedited Environmental Assessment process to address all regulatory requirements associated with identified solutions.