

## Release

For Immediate Release  
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### **PUBLIC INVITED TO ATTEND EAST SIDE ROAD OPEN HOUSE**

The East Side Road Authority, Inc. (ESRA) is inviting the public to attend an open house in Winnipeg to learn about the proposed construction of an all-season road on the east side of Lake Winnipeg and the East Side Large Area Transportation Network (LATN) Study.

“The communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg have waited a long time for an all-season road that will benefit local people,” said Ernie Gilroy, CEO of ESRA. “By helping to lower transportation costs, improve services, link communities, and provide jobs and sustainable economic development opportunities, an all-season road will help to improve the quality of life for residents in the region. As we begin planning for construction of the road, we want to hear from the public as to how best to move forward while respecting traditional ways of life and protecting the environment.”

The Winnipeg public open house has been scheduled for:

**When: Thursday, June 25, from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm**  
**Where: Winnipeg Convention Centre, Millennium Room**

Representatives from ESRA and SNC-Lavalin Inc., the engineering consultancy firm hired by ESRA as the Project Study Team to conduct the environmental impact assessment, complete the engineering design work and gather public input, will be in attendance to provide information on the project.

In the November 2008 Throne Speech, the Government of Manitoba announced its intention to move forward with construction of an all-season road on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. Since that time, ESRA has been established to manage the East Side Transportation Initiative (ESTI). The ESTI consists of two key components:

- 1) Construction of a 170 km all-season road from Provincial Road 304 to Berens River First Nation including engineering design work and the Environmental Impact Assessment.** ESRA has submitted an environmental licensing application for the all-season road to Manitoba Conservation and is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Before construction can begin, the project will require authorizations from federal and provincial regulators.

**2) A Large Area Transportation Network (LATN) Study to review potential transportation options for the region on the east side of Lake Winnipeg within the Wabanong Nakaygum Okimawin (WNO).** This study is currently underway and will identify potential transportation improvements for the remainder of the east side communities.

Pending environmental approval, construction of the all-season road from PR 304 to Berens River First Nation will begin in the fall of 2010.

ESRA has established a Public Involvement Program that includes two rounds of public open houses throughout the region. The first round of public open houses focuses on introducing the ESTI and gathering input from local communities, non-governmental organizations, and the general public prior to the completion of the EIS.

This round began in March and the upcoming Winnipeg public open house is the latest of a series of meetings that has included Hollow Water, Bloodvein, Berens River, Poplar River, Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi, Manto Sipi, God's Lake, Gods Lake Narrows, Wasagamack, and Garden Hill First Nations. Additional open houses are being planned for the remainder of the east side communities in the upcoming weeks as part of the first round of meetings.

The second round of open houses will focus on reporting back to the local communities and the public regarding the findings of the EIS. This round is scheduled to occur later this summer after the environmental assessment is completed.

Anyone interested to learn more about the ESTI is encouraged to attend the public open house. For more information, please visit the [www.eastsideroadauthority.mb.ca](http://www.eastsideroadauthority.mb.ca) or contact 945-4900 or toll free 1-866-356-6355.

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