



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contacts:

Christy Rodriguez
Marketing & Communications Manager
216-377-1347 office
216-246-7566 cell
www.portofcleveland.com

Mayor Bill Walters
Central Elgin, Ontario
519-631-8110
www.centralelgin.org

Port Authority Officials Visit Central Elgin, Ontario to Continue Cross-Lake Ferry Talks

Next step is to gauge interest from potential providers

Cleveland, Oh – June 29, 2011— Officials from the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority met in Port Stanley, Ontario last week with officials from the Municipality of Central Elgin and both sides agreed to begin gauging interest from ferry providers for a cross-lake ferry service.

Port and Central Elgin officials will jointly issue a request for expression of interest in early July to ferry providers. That request will explain what both sides envision for a Cleveland-Port Stanley ferry service and require potential providers to answer a series of questions to determine their interest in the project and to collect suggestions for vessel types, project infrastructure, and the development process.

“We are pleased that Cleveland port officials have visited Port Stanley,” said Central Elgin Mayor Bill Walters. “We had productive discussions and are ready to move ahead together to gauge interest and obtain operating concepts from private ferry providers.”

Central Elgin is a municipality comprised of a number of communities, including Port Stanley. The Central Elgin delegation included Deputy Mayor Dave Marr, Councillor Dan McNeil, Chief Administrative Officer & Clerk Donald Leitch, Director of Physical Services for the Municipality Lloyd Perrin, and Business Development Coordinator for the County of Elgin Kate Burns.

“We want to thank Mayor Walters and the other dignitaries for their hospitality on our visit to Central Elgin,” said Port President and CEO Will Friedman. “We are impressed with the infrastructure and many attractions of the Port Stanley area. We look forward to working with their team.”

Friedman reopened ferry discussions with Central Elgin officials last fall. The service had been contemplated for years, but did not materialize, in part because the Canadian government had not completed a long-awaited transfer of the waterfront property to local control.

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Initially the concept was to create a service primarily serving as a short cut for cross-border trucking. The focus is now on tourism, recreation and other passenger demand, with only limited truck traffic.

In March a delegation of officials from Central Elgin visited Cleveland. At that time officials from both sides agreed to craft a memorandum of understanding to create a pilot ferry service designed to limit the expenditure of public funds, and to ensure that the service is integrated into the strategic plans of both Central Elgin and the Port.

Separately the Port remains open to discussions with other communities in Ontario about launching a cross-lake service focused on trucking.

The responses to the request for expression of interest will be due by early August, and then jointly reviewed by officials from both the Port and Central Elgin. Once the officials compile a list of interested ferry service providers, a request for proposals will be issued.

The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority operates the Port of Cleveland and provides innovative financing services for a wide range of development projects in Northeast Ohio. Nearly 18,000 jobs and 1.8 billion in economic activity result from the 13 million tons of cargo that move through the Cleveland harbor on average each year.