

PREFACE

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 requires that the impacts of any proposed action of the federal government be analyzed and that the public be involved. There are three levels of analysis, called “classes of action.” Class I Actions are those that may significantly affect the environment and require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Class II and Class III Actions are expected to have lesser impacts.

This document is a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Final Section 4(f) Evaluation for the United States’ part of a proposed border crossing system between the international border cities of Detroit, Michigan, and Windsor, Ontario. **It presents the No Build and Preferred Alternatives and the measures proposed to minimize harm to the project area with the Preferred Alternative.** The proposed project also includes the plaza where tolls and U.S. border inspection activities occur and the interchange connecting the plaza to I-75. **This FEIS reflects the comments received during the public hearing process and updated data in all critical areas.** Sometimes impacts can be avoided, lessened, or mitigated. Mitigation means taking steps to avoid, reduce or compensate for impacts, such as replacing wetlands affected by a project. The potential indirect and cumulative effects, as well as the impacts this project may have across the international boundary in Canada, are also covered in this document.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was approved February 15, 2008, and public hearings were held March 18 and 19, 2008. This FEIS has been distributed to federal, state and local agencies, private organizations and all members of the public making substantive comments on the DEIS. Following the availability of the FEIS, it will be forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) with a recommendation that a Record of Decision (ROD) be issued. The ROD will allow the project to move forward into the design phase. The project has been included in the Southeast Michigan Council of Government’s (SEMCOG’s) fiscally-constrained Regional Transportation Plan.

Because impacts are anticipated to historic resources and public parks/recreation lands, which are called “adverse effects,” this FEIS also documents the coordination among agencies and the public that has occurred. Coordination on historic resources is required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. A Final Section 4(f) Evaluation is included as required under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, which protects parklands and historic sites.

This FEIS was prepared by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and a consultant team, in cooperation with FHWA and other members of a Technical Team

and the cooperating agencies listed on the cover of this FEIS. The Technical Team includes representatives from the following divisions within MDOT: Communications, Construction and Technology, Design, Environmental, Roadside Development, Intermodal/Multimodal, Project Planning, Real Estate, Statewide Planning, Traffic and Safety, and the Metro Region. Information was also furnished by other federal and state agencies, local units of government, public interest groups, a Private Sector Advisory Group, a Local Advisory Council of stakeholders and interested citizen groups, a Local Agency Group of governmental representatives, and individual citizens. **A list of preparers of this FEIS is in Section 7.**

A Federal agency may publish a notice in the Federal Register, pursuant to 23 USC §139(I), indicating that one or more Federal agencies have taken final action on permits, licenses, or approvals for a transportation project. If such notice is published, claims seeking judicial review of those Federal agency actions will be barred unless such claims are filed within 180 days after the date of publication of the notice, or within such shorter time period as is specified in the Federal laws pursuant to which judicial review of the Federal agency action is allowed. If no notice is published, then the periods of time that otherwise are provided by the Federal laws governing such claims will apply.