

**State Project No. 170-2725
9/30/08**

**Interstate 95 (I-95) Corridor
Old Lyme to New London, Connecticut**

**SAFETEA-LU Section 6002
Coordination Plan for the
Federal Environmental Impact Statement**

Table of Contents

	Page
Purpose of Coordination Plan.....	1
Project Background.....	1
Project Initiation.....	3
Participating and Cooperating Agencies.....	3
Public Involvement.....	4
Purpose and Need.....	5
Range of Alternatives.....	5
Environmental Review Scope.....	6
Document Preparation.....	6
Methodologies.....	6
Section 404 Permit Coordination.....	8
Connecticut Environmental Policy Act Coordination.....	8
Draft EIS Review and Comment.....	9
Selection of the Preferred Alternative.....	9
Final EIS.....	9
Project Schedule and Timeframe.....	10
Acceptance of Coordination Plan.....	11

Exhibits

- 1. Letter to FHWA from ConnDOT dated March 26, 2007**
- 2. Letter to ConnDOT from FHWA dated June 11, 2007**
- 3. Letter to FHWA from ConnDOT dated June 29, 2007**
- 4. Notice of Intent dated August 15, 2007**

**Project No. 170-2725
Interstate 95 (I-95) Corridor
Old Lyme to New London, Connecticut
Section 6002 Coordination Plan for the
Federal Environmental Impact Statement**

Purpose of Coordination Plan

Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act- A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) requires that the lead agencies establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation and comment during the environmental review process. The Coordination Plan is intended to document the process by which the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) will communicate with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), additional agencies involved in the project, and the public regarding the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Project No. 170-2725. This plan will establish a framework for regular communication among all of the agencies involved in the EIS process. The plan will establish a timeframe for the project, it will establish the participating and cooperating agencies for the project and it will establish a method for involving the public. This coordination plan is a living document and can be modified throughout the progression of the EIS process. This plan is available electronically at www.ct.gov/dotinfo as well as in hardcopy format at the Old Lyme Public Library, East Lyme Public Library, Waterford Public Library, and New London Public Library.

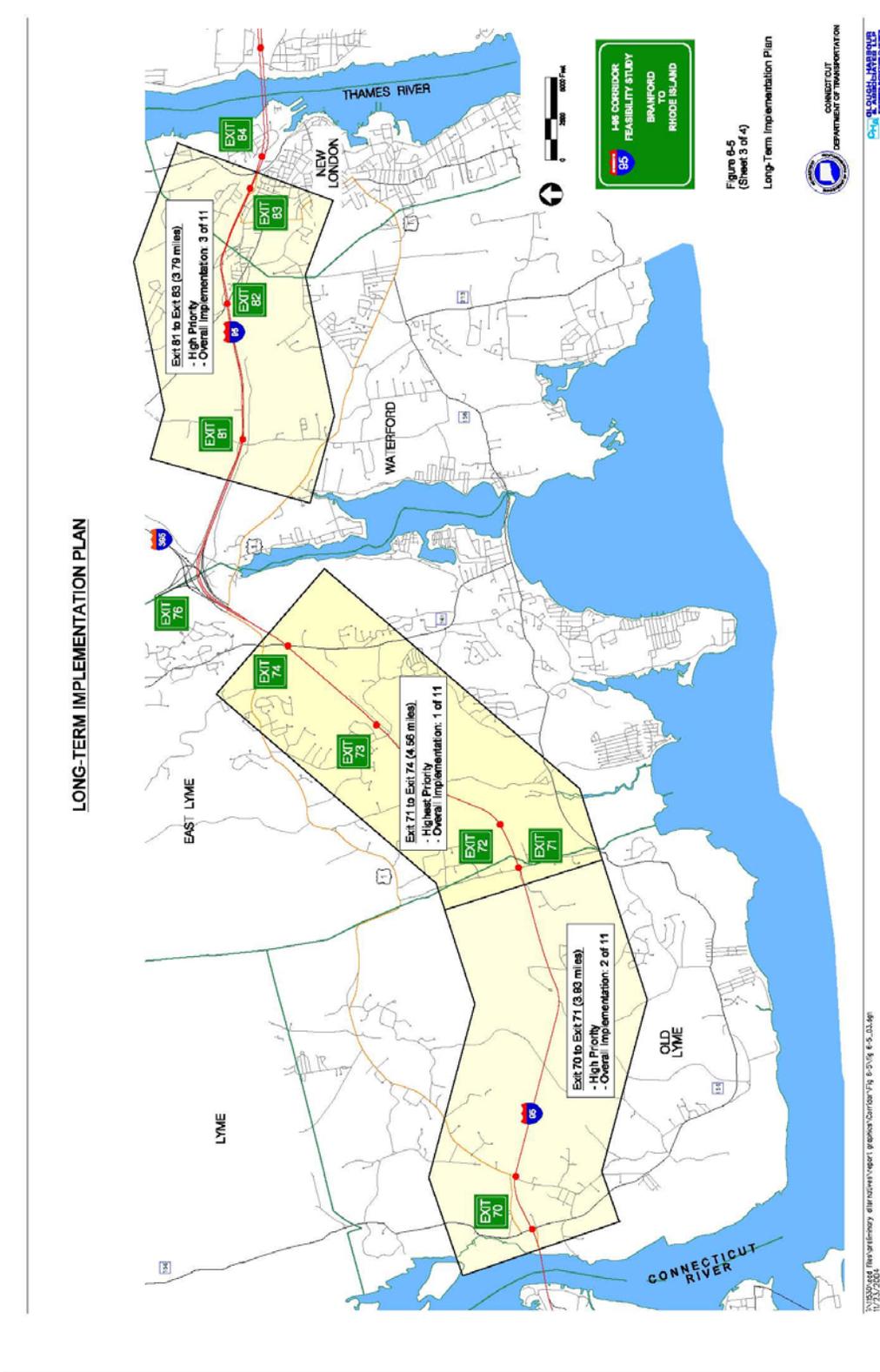
Project Background

The purpose and need of this project is to provide transportation system improvements to remedy existing and projected deficiencies, to address highway congestion and safety, and to improve the mobility of people, goods, and services in the I-95 corridor between Interchange 70 (Old Lyme, CT) and Interchange 84 (New London, CT). The following towns are included in the study area: Old Lyme, East Lyme, Waterford, and New London (Refer to Figure 1, a project location map taken from the feasibility study). The improvements are necessary based on the findings of the following two major needs and deficiency studies that have been completed:

- *Southeastern Connecticut Corridor Study*, dated January 1999 (ConnDOT)
- *I-95 Corridor Feasibility Study, Branford to Rhode Island*, dated December 2004 (Clough, Harbour & Associates)

Throughout the progression of these two needs and deficiency studies, Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as the public were able to participate in the development of alternatives for the project. The *I-95 Corridor Feasibility Study, Branford to Rhode Island* is available on the ConnDOT website at www.ct.gov/dotinfo as well as in hardcopy format for public inspection at ConnDOT's Office of Environmental Planning, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box 317546, Newington, CT 06131-7546. The *Southeastern Connecticut Corridor Study* is available only in hardcopy for public inspection at ConnDOT's Office of Environmental Planning at the above address.

Figure 1: Project Location Map



Project Initiation

In a letter to FHWA dated March 26, 2007, ConnDOT requested approval to prepare an EIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the portion of the I-95 corridor between Interchanges 70 and 84 using the information prepared by Clough Harbour & Associates (CHA) in *Interstate 95 Corridor Feasibility Study, Branford to Rhode Island* as the supporting documentation for preparing the draft EIS (DEIS) and the final EIS (FEIS). CHA will be the consultant for this project and will deliver all reports to ConnDOT.

In a letter to ConnDOT dated June 11, 2007, FHWA indicated their concurrence with ConnDOT's request to proceed with an EIS for this portion of the I-95 corridor.

In a letter to FHWA dated June 29, 2007, ConnDOT indicated their acknowledgment of FHWA's concurrence with the preparation of an EIS for the portion of the I-95 corridor between Interchanges 70 and 84 being appropriate.

A Notice of Intent (NOI) was issued on August 15, 2007 and published in the *Federal Register* on August 22, 2007.

Copies of the above cited correspondence and NOI are attached as Exhibits to this Coordination Plan.

Participating and Cooperating Agencies

The project team for this undertaking shall consist of CHA, ConnDOT, FHWA, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and subconsultants to CHA. Coordination with the team shall be maintained through regular meetings, and the team will meet with ConnDOT periodically throughout the study period.

FHWA is the lead Federal agency for this project. As the lead Federal agency in the Section 6002 process, FHWA is responsible for making certain decisions as specified in Section 6002. In addition, FHWA has an overall responsibility for facilitating the expeditious completion of the environmental review process, reviewing and accepting the EIS, and ensuring that ConnDOT complies with all requirements. ConnDOT will act as Joint Lead Agency for this project.

Cooperating Agencies are those governmental agencies that have jurisdiction by law or special expertise regarding the environmental impacts involved in the proposed transportation project. Cooperating Agencies will be asked to review technical reports and draft chapters of the DEIS in their respective fields of expertise. The Cooperating Agencies for this project include the following: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), FTA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). In accordance with the terminology used in §6002 of SAFETEA-LU, cooperating agencies are also participating agencies.

Participating Agencies are those governmental agencies that may have an interest in a project and are therefore asked for their input. The Participating Agencies for this project include the City of New London, Town of East Lyme, Town of Waterford, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Connecticut Department of Public Health, Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SECCOG), and the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation.

FHWA invited the federal agencies and Native American Tribal Governments, while ConnDOT was responsible for coordinating with state, local, and regional agencies.

Table 1: Participating & Cooperating Agencies

Agency	Contact	Telephone	Email
FHWA	Eloise Powell	(860) 659-6703 x3010	Eloise.powell@fhwa.dot.gov
ConnDOT	Keith T. Hall	(860) 594-2926	Keith.hall@po.state.ct.us
ACOE	Susan K. Lee	(978) 318-8494	Susan.k.lee@usace.army.mil
FTA	William Gordon	(617) 494-3514	William.gordon@dot.gov
EPA	Tim Timmermann Mike Marsh	(617) 918-1025 (617) 918-1556	timmermann.timothy@epa.gov marsh.mike@epa.gov
USFWS	Vernon Lang	(603) 223-2541	vernon_lang@fws.gov
USGS	John Mullaney	(860) 291-6760	jmullane@usgs.gov
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation	Stan Harris, III	(860) 312-2501	sharris@mptn-nsn.gov
DEP	Frederick Riese	(860) 424-4110	frederick.riese@po.state.ct.us
City of New London	Harry Smith	(860) 437-6380	hsmith@ci.new-london.ct.us
Town of East Lyme	Paul Formica	(860) 739-6931	pformica@eltownhall.com
Town of Waterford	Daniel Steward	(860) 444-5834	dsteward@waterfordct.org
SECCOG	James Butler	(860) 889-2324	jbutler@seccog.org
Dept. of Public Health	Sara Rossetti	(860) 509-7318	sarah.rossetti@po.state.ct.us

Public Involvement

Under NEPA the public must be given an opportunity for input during the EIS environmental review process. The public is encouraged to be involved early and often during project development. Public meetings will be held and the DEIS will be made available for public comment as well. A notice will be published in area newspapers in order to notify the public of the availability of the DEIS. The notice will indicate where the document can be obtained for review and it will also indicate where additional information can be obtained regarding the project. The public must be allowed an opportunity to provide input on the Purpose and Need of the project and the range of alternatives considered for the project as well.

The I-95 EIS process will involve a public outreach program intended to inform the public and receive any input the public may have regarding this project. The public participation process contains the following elements: (1) meeting with town boards, (2) meeting with SECCOG, (3) advisory committee meetings, (4) public information meetings, (5) public workshops relative to Secondary and Cumulative Impacts, (6) newsletters, (7) public hearings on the DEIS; and (8) a website.

The project website will be created to inform the public of project status and to solicit comments from the public. The website will be updated periodically during the course of the project to provide current project

information and to provide users with an opportunity to submit comments. Content on the website will include reports of past meetings, information regarding future meetings, photographs of the project area, current project status, and links to relevant websites. Once the website has been constructed, a link to it will be available at www.ct.gov/dotinfo.

The Public Indirect and Cumulative Effects (ICE) Workshops will be advertised in the project newsletter and on the project website. The goal of the first workshop is to explain the purpose of ICE analysis to the public and to obtain information from the public that may assist in the analysis. The goal of the second workshop is to present the results of the ICE analysis and to obtain comments from the public regarding this study.

Public meetings/hearings are required to keep the public informed of the project, the EIS process, and to solicit input from the public. The public scoping meeting for this project was held on October 18, 2007 at the Waterford Town Hall and public hearings will be held throughout the EIS process. Once the DEIS is approved and filed, ConnDOT will hold public hearings to present the project to the public and receive comments on the project. These comments will be considered by ConnDOT when selecting the preferred alternative.

ConnDOT will participate in all meetings with the public and the participating agencies and on an “as needed” basis in meetings with Town officials and boards. CHA will inform all participating agencies of the meetings. ConnDOT and FHWA will review draft materials prior to distribution.

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need of this project is to provide transportation system improvements to remedy existing and projected deficiencies, to address highway congestion and safety, and to improve the mobility of people, goods, and services in the I-95 corridor between Interchange 70 (Old Lyme, CT) and Interchange 84 (New London, CT).

Range of Alternatives

The alternatives that were identified and evaluated in the previous feasibility study, as well as those suggested by the participating agencies will be documented and considered in the EIS. These alternatives will be assessed and reviewed by all involved agencies prior to determining which alternatives will be fully evaluated for environmental impacts in the EIS. The range of alternatives that will be considered for this study include the following:

- No action alternative-No improvements are made to the I-95 corridor
- Additional Capacity on I-95- The addition of a third mainline in each direction including interchange modifications
- Addition of a center reversible lane (zipper lane)
- Addition of managed shoulder lane
- Ramp Metering
- Incident Management
- Transit Initiatives
- Transportation Systems Management (TSM)
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM)
- Hybrid / Combination of alternatives

Environmental Review Scope

The consultant's scope of services for this undertaking will include the following:

- Study Management and Coordination
- Public Outreach
- NEPA, CEPA, and 404 Coordination
- Section 106 Consultation and Section 4(f) Evaluation
- Base Map Preparation
- Data Collection and Evaluation
- Transportation Alternative Development and Evaluation
- Conceptual Engineering and Evaluation
- Draft EIS and Public Hearings
- Final EIS Preparation
- Record of Decision

The data used for the preparation of the EIS will include the data that was contained in the I-95 Corridor Feasibility Study documents to the greatest extent possible.

Document Preparation

FHWA's official guidance for the preparation of EIS documents is contained in Technical Advisory T 6640.8A, "Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents," dated October 30, 1987, which is available on the Internet at:

<http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/projdev/impTA6640.asp>. Recommendations for improving the quality of environmental documents are contained in a May 2006 report prepared by AASHTO and the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) in cooperation with FHWA entitled "Improving the Quality of Environmental Documents," which is available on the Internet at:

http://www.environment.transportation.org/pdf/IQED-1_for_CEE.pdf. Additional guidance is also available on the Internet at: <http://environment.fhwa.dot.gov/projdev/pd2implement.asp>.

Methodologies

The consultant will prepare a document for submittal to the ACOE that documents the occurrence of wetlands within the project study area, and that contains a preliminary wetland functions and values assessment. Wetlands will be identified based on National Wetlands Inventory and SCS Soils mapping, and interpolated onto the 1"=200' study area maps using aerial photography. A functions and values assessment of the major mapped wetland systems in the project area will be conducted in accordance with the 13 functions and values recognized by ACOE's "Highway Methodology" guidance and best professional judgment. This assessment will produce a Wetland Identification and Assessment Memorandum, which will be incorporated into the DEIS as a technical appendix. Wetlands resources will be assessed according to both the State of Connecticut and Federal standards.

Indirect and Cumulative Effects (ICE) Analysis will be used to determine if the project fosters or accelerates development beyond the immediate project area and if the proposed action, when added to other actions collectively results in significant environmental impacts. The ICE Analysis for this document will estimate the reasonably foreseeable land use changes that may take place concurrently with and/or induced by the proposed action. By estimating land development and identifying trends with and without the

proposed project, inferences can be made as to corresponding impacts to natural and community resources. Through a coordinated effort, FHWA, ConnDOT and EPA developed a guideline to follow for ICE methodology and analysis. The proposed methodology for this document will follow the eight steps listed in *NCHRP Report 466 – Desk Reference for Estimating the Indirect Effects of Proposed Transportation Projects* (NCHRP, 2002). The steps are as follows: (1) Initial Scoping for Indirect Effects Analysis, (2) Identify Study Area Directions and Goals, (3) Inventory Notable Features, (4) Identify Impact-Causing Activities of the Proposed Action and Alternatives, (5) Identify Potentially Significant Indirect effects for Analysis, (6) Analyze Indirect Effects, (7) Evaluate Analysis Results; and (8) Assess the Consequences and Develop Mitigation and Enhancement Strategies.

The following reference materials will also be used as guidance for the ICE Analysis: (1) Maryland State Highway Administration’s *Indirect and Cumulative Effects Analysis (ICE Analysis) Guidelines – For Environmental Impact Statements, and Environmental Assessments and Categorical Exclusions* (May 2007), (2) Washington State’s *Environmental Procedures Manual M 31-11.01* (April 2007), (3) *Questions and Answers Regarding the Consideration of Indirect and Cumulative Impacts in the NEPA Process* (FHWA, 2004), (4) *NCHRP Report 466 – Desk Reference for Estimating the Indirect Effects of Proposed Transportation Projects* (NCHRP, 2002), (5) *Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents* (FHWA, 2001), (6) *Considering Cumulative Effects* (Council on Environmental Quality, 1997); and (7) FHWA’s *Position Paper on Secondary and Cumulative Impact Assessment* (August 20, 1992).

The water-quality changes anticipated as a result of expansion of impervious areas requiring deicing, and the subsequent changes in chloride and sodium concentrations and loads to streams are of particular concern. A monitoring plan will be developed to evaluate baseline water-quality conditions along the portion of I-95 that will be studied for this document. USGS has recommended the following three phase approach: (1) evaluating existing information to estimate current chloride concentrations and loads and to rank them by watershed (the product being a work plan for data collection to begin before winter 2008-2009), (2) the collection of data; and (3) the analysis of the data. Coordination between FHWA, ConnDOT, EPA, USGS, and DEP will continue to further refine the methodologies for water-quality analysis as the project moves forward.

The objectives of Phase 1 include the following:

- A. Summarize GIS characteristics of all of the watersheds upstream of and including I-95 between Old Lyme and New London, Connecticut.
- B. Estimate streamflow characteristics for each stream based on existing information and equations used by USGS in Connecticut.
- C. Rank watersheds based on estimated chloride values and other factors.
- D. Produce a proposal and work plan for monitoring in selected areas that are representative of the range of conditions in this section of I-95.

Approach:

- A. The following GIS characteristics (and others as necessary) will be determined for each watershed crossing I-95 between Old Lyme and New London. These GIS characteristics will be used to estimate current impacts from chloride, as well as to assist in determining which basins meet characteristics deemed suitable for monitoring. The characteristics include (but are not limited to):
 - a. Drainage basin area
 - b. Land use/land cover from UConn CLEAR data <http://clear.uconn.edu>

- c. Impervious area using ISAT tool
- d. Road density, summarized by road type from ESRI Inc., or from ConnDOT sources
- e. Population density – from USGS digital grid based on 2000 census block groups
- f. Surficial geology
- g. Locations of landfills and salt storage areas
- h. Soils, hydrologic soil group, from U.S. Department of Agriculture, NRCS, <http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>

B. Streamflow characteristics will be estimated using (but not limited to) the following methods:

- a. Estimated peak flows will be determined using the USGS streamstats application <http://water.usgs.gov/osw/streamstats/connecticut.html>
- b. Average daily flows will be determined using maps of runoff, and through analysis of data from nearby continuous gaging stations.
- c. Average base flow will be determined using runoff (from b.), and an equation used by Mazzaferro and others (1979). The estimate from the equation is based on the amount of coarse-grained stratified drift in each watershed.

C. Streams will be ranked by their potential maximum chloride concentrations, and loads. This will be done by evaluating the GIS characteristics for roads (density of different road types), impervious areas, unsewered population density, and percent urbanized area. Other characteristics will include the presence of landfills and salt storage areas that are typically sources of chloride. These will be evaluated relative to the size of the drainage area. The final ranking methodology will be determined after preliminary data analysis, and meetings with FHWA and ConnDOT. The USGS has developed regression models for predicting chloride yields, and maximum measured concentrations. The use of these methods locally will be explored. Chloride concentrations are strongly related to watershed road density.

D. After completing the GIS statistics and ranking scheme for streams, the USGS will meet with FHWA, ConnDOT, DEP, and EPA in order to discuss results and formulate a monitoring scheme. USGS will then create a work plan and proposal to conduct the monitoring and analysis.

Section 404 Permit Coordination

The coordination process between the FHWA NEPA process and the ACOE's Section 404(b)(1) process for evaluating alternatives and impacts is known as "Highway Methodology". This process is intended to satisfy both FHWA's selection of a preferred alternative and the ACOE's requirements for selecting a Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA). The process requires that the ACOE coordinates with ConnDOT and provides written approvals at key milestones in the project. Concurrent with preparation of the DEIS, a preliminary application for a Section 404 Permit will be prepared by ConnDOT.

Connecticut Environmental Policy Act Coordination

In addition to complying with NEPA requirements, the DEIS will be prepared to comply with the requirements for an Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) in accordance with the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) and its associated state regulations.

Draft EIS Review and Comment

The DEIS must be filed with EPA; this begins a comment period which SAFETEA-LU mandates cannot exceed 60 days unless otherwise agreed to. For intermediate administrative reviews by participating agencies, the deadline for comments shall be 30 days, unless a different comment period is established by agreement of the lead agencies and the participating agencies. The comment period for the DEIS will begin on the date that EPA publishes a notice of availability in the *Federal Register* for the DEIS. Copies of the DEIS will be distributed to all participating agencies, corridor town halls and public libraries, and any member of the public who requests inclusion in the distribution. All comments made during the public hearing(s) and/or received during the comment period will be considered for the FEIS.

Selection of the Preferred Alternative

Coordination will occur with ACOE, EPA and USFWS during their review of the DEIS and the Section 404 Permit Application. Meetings will be held between ConnDOT and FHWA, in consultation with the participating agencies, to determine which alternative is to be considered the LEDPA/ Preferred Alternative.

Final EIS

The FEIS will explain the process by which the preferred alternative was selected, and include a detailed description of the preferred alternative. Once the FEIS is complete, copies will be distributed to all participating agencies, cooperating agencies, any individual who provides substantive comments on the DEIS, and any member of the public who requests inclusion in the distribution. In accordance with the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, once a notice of the FEIS is published in the *Federal Register* by EPA, a 30 day waiting period must occur before the Record of Decision (ROD) can be issued by FHWA. The ROD is scheduled to be issued in March 2011 for this project.

Project Schedule and Timeframe

ConnDOT has prepared a draft schedule that indicates projected dates for meetings and the preparation of the document associated with this project.

Table 2: Project Schedule

Action	Target
Issue Notice of Intent	August 2007
Draft Coordination Plan	August 2007
Advisory Committee Meetings	Regularly throughout the EIS process
Public Scoping Meeting	October 2007
Concurrence on Coordination Plan	August 2008
Meeting with Participating Agencies regarding Alternatives	September 2008
Issue Notice to Proceed/ Begin Preparation of Draft EIS (DEIS)	October 2008
Permit Application to ACOE	June 2009
File DEIS with EPA	February 2010
Public Hearing on DEIS	April 2010
Comment Period ends	May 2010
Identify Preferred Alternative	June 2010
Begin Preparation of Final EIS	June 2010
File Final EIS (FEIS) with EPA	January 2011
Issue Record of Decision (ROD)	March 2011

Acceptance of Coordination Plan

The signatures of the following duly authorized agency representatives indicate acceptance of this Coordination Plan for the purposes stated herein:

LEAD AGENCIES:

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

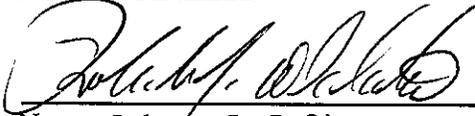
By: Elaine F. Powell Date: 3/23/09
for George R. Poirier
Acting Division Administrator

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

By: [Signature] Date: 3/6/2009
Edgar T. Hurlle
Transportation Planning Director

COOPERATING AGENCIES:

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

By:  Date: 12/5/08

Name: Robert J. DeSista
Title: Chief, Permits and Enforcement Branch
Regulatory Division

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

By: *Timothy Timmerman* Date: 10/6/08
Name: *Timothy Timmerman*
Title: *Environmental Scientist*

UNITED STATES FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

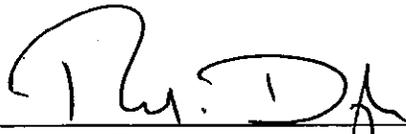
We agree to continue our role as a cooperating agency within the limits of available resources

By: *Vernon B. King* Date: *12/3/08*
Name:
Title: *Asst. Sup.*

UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

By: Virginia de Lima Date: 11/14/08
Name: Virginia de Lima
Title: Director, Connecticut Water Science Center

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

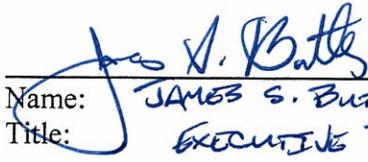
By:  Date: 12/1/08
Name: _____
Title: REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES:

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

By: Frederick Z. Reese Date: September 18, 2008
Name:
Title: Senior Environmental Analyst

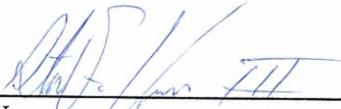
SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

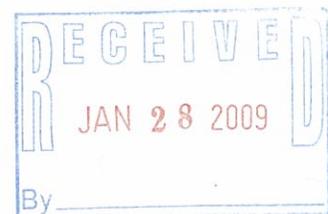
By:  Date: 9/10/08
Name: JAMES S. BUTLER
Title: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CITY OF NEW LONDON

By: Martin H. Berlin Date: 1-7-09
Name: MARTIN H. Berlin
Title: city manager

MASHANTUCKET PEQUOT TRIBAL NATION

By:  Date: 12-11-08
Name: _____
Title: ASSIST. ENGINEER



TOWN OF WATERFORD

By:  Date: 1/30/09
Name: DANIEL M STEWARD
Title: First Selectman

TOWN OF EAST LYME

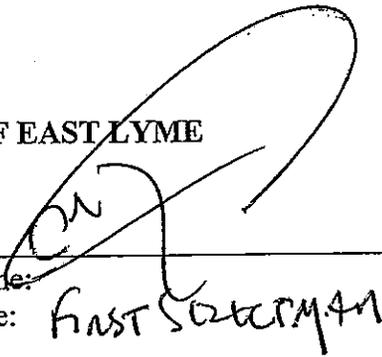
By: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

3/2/2009



Handwritten signature of the First Selectman, appearing to be 'ON' followed by a large, stylized flourish.

FIRST SELECTMAN



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546

Phone:

March 26, 2007

Mr. Bradley Keazer
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
628-2 Hebron Avenue, Suite 303
Glastonbury, CT 06033

Dear Mr. Keazer:

Subject: Interstate 95 (I-95) Corridor, Branford – Rhode Island
Feasibility Study and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
Documentation

This is a follow up to my recent meeting with Mr. John Formosa regarding the preparation of NEPA documents in light of potential funding.

The Department of Transportation (Department) completed the "Interstate 95 Corridor, Branford – Rhode Island Feasibility Study" in December 2004. This Study provides an assessment of the transportation related deficiencies and needs in the corridor (projected to year 2025); an evaluation of various transportation modes that currently exist and could potentially serve travel demand along the I-95 corridor, including rail, bus, and rideshare programs; and an evaluation of potential improvement concepts. Also analyzed, was the potential to address transportation demand through transit services alone, as well as the potential for instituting a managed lane (value pricing) concept to manage travel demand along this corridor. The full Study final report can be viewed at www.ct.gov/dotinfo (select Studies on the left and then I-95 Branford to Rhode Island).

The final report presents a number of near- and long-term recommended improvement concepts and an implementation plan for the I-95 corridor Study improvements (refer to Chapter 6 of the December 2004 final report). The 58-mile corridor study is along I-95, between Interchange 54 (Branford) and the Connecticut/Rhode Island state line.



As a prelude to the 2004 Study, the “Southeast Connecticut Corridor Study,” completed in 1999 by the Department, was prepared in response to Public Act 97-214, which required the Commissioner of Transportation to conduct a study of the transportation demand and needs of the southeast corridor of the state. The 1999 Study identified the need for additional capacity on I-95, and recommended that a more detailed study be performed to assess the feasibility of providing a third lane in all two-lane sections of I-95 between the town of Branford and the Rhode Island state line.

The “Interstate 95 Corridor, Branford – Rhode Island Feasibility Study” process consisted of the following tasks:

- Study Management/Public Participation
- Analysis of Existing Conditions
- Analysis of Future (year 2025) Conditions
- Identification of Improvement Alternatives
- Refinement of Alternatives
- Development of Recommendations
- Development of Implementation Plan
- Publication and Review of the Draft Feasibility Study
- Publication of the Final Feasibility Study

A study Advisory Committee, with representation that included the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Connecticut Division Office, was established to help guide the study process, review technical documents, and provide direct input regarding improvement recommendations. Public participation was a major component of this Study (refer to Chapter 1 of the December 2004 final report). Committee and public input was solicited through local outreach meetings and public information meetings. In total, six Advisory Committee meetings, thirty-four local outreach meetings, and six public information meetings were held. In addition, a dedicated study web site was made available (www.I95southeastct.org) to allow the general public to view relevant information and provide comments. A toll-free telephone number (800-236-0794) was also established, allowing the public to inquire and provide comments.

Information regarding environmental resources, including environmental constraint mapping was prepared to assist in the development of the preliminary alternatives analysis process concerning highway improvements to I-95 (refer to Chapter 4 of the December 2004 final report).

The recommended improvements resulting from this study process include an estimated \$1.62 billion of near- and long-term modifications (year of expenditure dollars, years 2012 – 2022). Near-term projects consist of the addition of speed change lanes, median improvements, intersection improvements, and interchange reconfigurations at

an estimated capital cost of \$41.2 million (2004 dollars). For the long-term, recommended projects consist of widening I-95 to three lanes in each direction between Interchange 54 (Branford) and Interchange 92 (Stonington), at a capital cost of \$1.57 billion. The portion of the study corridor between Interchanges 70 and 84 (Area 2) has been identified as having the greatest need for improvement and is recommended to be given the highest priority for advancement. This would be followed by the portion between Interchanges 54 and 69 (Area 1), and then by the portion between Interchanges 89 and 92 (Area 3).

The Department is interested in pursuing the preparation of a federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to pursue the Area 2 improvements as proposed in the "Interstate 95 Corridor, Branford – Rhode Island Feasibility Study." The Department will prepare a federal EIS in accordance with NEPA, concurrent with a Connecticut Environmental Impact Evaluation in accordance with the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act.

This is to request concurrence of FHWA to conduct an EIS, and apply the documentation prepared and published in the "Interstate 95 Corridor, Branford – Rhode Island Feasibility Study" as the supporting documentation for preparing the Draft and Final EIS for Area 2 of the I-95 corridor.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (860) 594-2005.

Very truly yours,



Edgar T. Hurle
Transportation Planning Director
Bureau of Policy and Planning



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

628-2 Hebron Avenue, Suite 303
Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033-5007

June 11, 2007

IN REPLY REFER TO:
HPR-CT

Mr. Ralph J. Carpenter, Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
P.O. Box 317546
Newington, Connecticut 06131-7546

Subject: State Project No. 170-2295, I-95 Interchanges 70 to 84
Initiation of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Dear Commissioner Carpenter:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has reviewed the Department's letter dated March 26, 2007 requesting approval to initiate the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for proposed improvements along 12.3 miles of I-95 between Old Lyme and New London (Area 2 – Interchanges 70 to 84).

These improvements constitute one of several near- and long-term proposals, with an estimated total cost of \$1.62 billion, for the 58-mile long I-95 corridor between Branford, Connecticut and Rhode Island that were recommended in a feasibility study published by the Department in December 2004. Environmental resources within the highway corridor, including wetlands and cultural features, were identified and mapped on 2000' scale plans using GIS data; corridor improvement concepts, superimposed with wetland boundaries, were illustrated on 200' scale aerial images; and environmental impacts were evaluated for several resource categories.

The study also included an evaluation of potential transit service enhancements between New Haven, Connecticut and Westerly, Rhode Island (extending beyond the limits of the 58-mile corridor). A significant level of public participation was involved – six (6) Advisory Committee meetings, thirty-four (34) local outreach meetings, and six (6) public informational meetings. In addition, an internet web site and toll-free telephone number were used to make information available to the public and to solicit comments during the study.

23 CFR 771.111(f) of our regulations requires that the following conditions be satisfied in order to ensure the meaningful evaluation of alternatives and to avoid commitments to transportation improvements before they are fully evaluated:

1. Connect logical termini and be of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope;
2. Have independent utility or independent significance, *i.e.*, be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made; and
3. Not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

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In addition, 23 CFR 771.111(g) of our regulations suggests that for major transportation actions, the tiering of EISs, as discussed in 40 CFR 1502.20 of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations, may be appropriate. Since the December 2004 feasibility study encompassed much of what would have been covered in the first level of a tiered EIS approach for this 58-mile corridor, we do not find it necessary to undertake a tiered approach.

The preparation of one or more EISs is clearly necessary to evaluate the environmental impacts of the long-term improvements recommended for this 58-mile corridor. While a single EIS for the entire corridor would be desirable, an EIS covering only the Area 2 section of the corridor would be in compliance with the above cited FHWA and CEQ regulations for the following reasons:

- The project limits (Area 2) are bounded by major bridge structures which each have enough capacity (3 or more through traffic lanes) for the foreseeable future (20 years), and the project is of sufficient length (a non-contiguous total of 12.3 miles) to address environmental matters on a broad scope;
- The project (Area 2) has independent utility by improving an existing interstate highway connection between a limited access highway (Route 9) to the west, and a major employment center (Groton – New London) to the east; and
- The project improvements (Area 2) would not restrict the consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements east and west of, or within, the project limits.

Based upon the above review and analysis, we concur with the Department's request to proceed with the preparation of an EIS for Area 2 of the I-95 corridor. Per the recommendation of the December 2004 feasibility study, the purpose and need should be stated as the addition of a third through traffic lane in each direction of this I-95 corridor.

Please ensure that all applicable requirements of SAFETEA-LU are complied with, including the development of a coordination plan and a finance plan. Also be advised that 23 CFR 630.112 of FHWA regulations contains provisions that could require the state to repay preliminary engineering project funds in the event that rights-of-way acquisitions or actual construction is not started by the close of the tenth fiscal year following the fiscal year in which the preliminary engineering project funds are authorized.

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Mr. Robert W. Turner, P.E. of our office at (860) 659-6703 ext. 3011 or by e-mail at: robert.w.turner@fhwa.dot.gov.

Sincerely yours,



For: Bradley D. Keazer
Division Administrator

cc: Edgar T. Hurle – Cynthia S. Holden



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546

NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546



Office of the
Commissioner

An Equal Opportunity Employer

June 29, 2007

Mr. Bradley D. Keazer
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
628-2 Hebron Avenue, Suite 303
Glastonbury, CT 06033

Dear Mr. Keazer:

This is in response to your letter dated June 11, 2007 concerning State Project No. 170-2295, I-95 Interchanges 70 to 84, initiation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The Department of Transportation (Department) acknowledges that the Federal Highway Administration concurs that preparation of an individual EIS for the section of I-95 between Interchanges 70 and 84 is appropriate. The Department also understands that the document will indicate the purpose and need to add a third through-traffic lane, in each direction, on this section of I-95.

All applicable requirements of SAFETEA-LU will be complied with during the preparation of the EIS, and the provisions of 23 CFR 630.112 concerning possible repayment of preliminary engineering costs will apply to this project.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Mr. Edgar T. Hurle, Transportation Planning Director, at (860) 594-2005.

Sincerely,


Ralph J. Carpenter
COMMISSIONER



also announces the availability of this program for public review and comment.

An airport operator who has submitted noise exposure maps that are found by FAA to be in compliance with the requirements of Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) part 150, promulgated pursuant to the Act, may submit a noise compatibility program for FAA approval which sets forth the measures the operator has taken or proposes to reduce existing non-compatible uses and prevent the introduction of additional non-compatible uses.

The FAA has formally received the noise compatibility program for Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, effective on August 14, 2007. The airport operator has requested that the FAA review this material and that the noise mitigation measures, to be implemented jointly by the airport and surrounding communities, be approved as a noise compatibility program under section 47504 of the Act. Preliminary review of the submitted material indicates that it conforms to FAR part 150 requirements for the submittal of noise compatibility programs, but that further review will be necessary prior to approval or disapproval of the program. The formal review period, limited by law to a maximum of 180 days, will be completed on or before February 10, 2008.

The FAA's detailed evaluation will be conducted under the provisions of 14 CFR part 150, section 150.33. The primary considerations in the evaluation process are whether the proposed measures may reduce the level of aviation safety or create an undue burden on interstate or foreign commerce, and whether they are reasonably consistent with obtaining the goal of reducing existing non-compatible land uses and preventing the introduction of additional non-compatible land uses.

Interested persons are invited to comment on the proposed program with specific reference to these factors. All comments relating to these factors, other than those properly addressed to local land use authorities, will be considered by the FAA to the extent practicable. Copies of the noise exposure maps and the proposed noise compatibility program are available for examination at the following locations:

Federal Aviation Administration, 2601 Meacham Boulevard, Fort Worth, Texas; Mr. Jim Smith, 3600 Presidential Blvd., Suite 411, Austin, Texas 76719.

Questions may be directed to the individual named above under the

heading, **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.**

Issued in Forth Worth, Texas, August 14, 2007.

Kelvin L. Solco,
Manager, Airports Division.

[FR Doc. 07-4106 Filed 8-21-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: New London County, CT

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for proposed transportation improvements to 12.3 miles (21 km) of Interstate 95 (I-95) in New London County, Connecticut.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bradley D. Keazer, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, 628-2 Hebron Avenue, Suite 303, Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033, telephone (860) 659-6703, ext. 3009; or Edgar T. Hurle, Transportation Planning Director, Bureau of Policy and Planning, Connecticut Department of Transportation, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box 317546, Newington, CT 06131-7546, telephone: (860) 594-2005.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA, in cooperation with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) on a proposal for transportation improvements to I-95 between interchanges 70 and 84 in the towns of Old Lyme, East Lyme, Waterford and New London, Connecticut for a distance of approximately 12.3 miles (21 km).

Improvements to the I-95 corridor are considered necessary to improve safety and to provide for increases in projected traffic volumes. Alternatives under consideration include, but are not limited to: (1) Taking no action; and (2) addition of a third travel lane in each direction. The EIS will use data and findings from two major deficiency and needs studies entitled "Southeastern Connecticut Corridor Study" dated January 1999 and "I-95 Corridor Feasibility Study, Branford to Rhode Island" dated December 2004. Copies of these studies are available from ConnDOT's Office of Environmental Planning at the address shown above.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies and elected officials, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have an interest in this proposal. Public scoping meetings, public hearings and public information meetings will be held. Public notice will be given of the date, time and place of these meetings and hearings. The draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearings. An Internet Web site will be established to provide information on the project which may be accessed at <http://www.ct.gov/dotinfo/>.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to either the FHWA or ConnDOT at the addresses provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 CFR part 771.

Issued on: August 15, 2007.

Bradley D. Keazer,

Division Administrator, Hartford, Connecticut.

[FR Doc. 07-4127 Filed 8-21-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Notice Before Waiver With Respect to Land at Lonesome Pine Airport, Wise, VA

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent of waiver with respect to land.

SUMMARY: The FAA is publishing notice of proposed release of 0.81 acres of land at the Lonesome Pine Airport, Wise, Virginia to the town of Wise or Wise county Industrial Development Authority (Property Map Parcel 35). The release of land will transfer the responsibility (and potential liability) for maintenance and security of the water tank site to the appropriate governmental entity. Releasing the land

airport and metropolitan area, and points in between.

The Tier I EIS will be carried out in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR part 1500 et seq.) implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), FRA's Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts (64 FR 28545; May 26, 1999), and FHWA regulations (23 CFR part 771 et seq.).

In addition to NEPA, the Tier I EIS will address other applicable statutes, regulations, and executive orders, including the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, the Endangered Species Act, and Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice.

The goals of the EIS are to: (1) Examine the regional transportation implications of the project concept; (2) evaluate the modal and technology alternatives available to provide HSGT between the two cities; (3) develop and evaluate location alternatives; and (4) determine the logical segments to be carried forward for detailed evaluation in subsequent (Tier II) environmental documents.

In a Tier I EIS, alternatives will be evaluated at a broad level of analysis. Proposed alternatives include a No-Build Alternative (used as a baseline for comparison of all alternatives), HSGT in a corridor that roughly parallels Interstate-75, one or more corridors utilizing a portion of an existing CSX transportation rail line, and a corridor that roughly parallels U.S. Route 411. Other possible corridor locations are expected to be identified during the alternatives development phase of the study.

GDOT will contact appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, as well as other organizations and individuals who have previously expressed interest, or are known to be interested, in this proposal to describe the proposed scope and solicit comments. Formal scoping meetings have been scheduled as indicated above.

Additional public information meetings and public hearings will be held during the development of the Tier I EIS. Public notice will be given of the times and locations of scoping meetings, public information meetings, and public hearings. The Draft Tier I EIS will be made available for review and comment prior to the public hearings.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are

identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the Tier I EIS should be directed to GDOT at the addresses provided above.

Issued in Washington, DC on August 16, 2007.

Rodney Barry, P.E.,

Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, Atlanta, GA.

Mark E. Yachmetz,

Associate Administrator for Railroad Development, Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, DC.

[FR Doc. 07-4109 Filed 8-21-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-06-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: New London County, CO

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for proposed transportation improvements to 12.3 miles (21 km) of Interstate 95 (I-95) in New London County, Connecticut.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bradley D. Keazer, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, 628-2 Hebron Avenue, Suite 303, Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033, telephone (860) 659-6703, ext. 3009; or Edgar T. Hurlle, Transportation Planning Director, Bureau of Policy and Planning, Connecticut Department of Transportation, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box 317546, Newington, CT 06131-7546, telephone: (860) 594-2005.

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(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Authority: 23 CFR 771

Dated: Issued on August 15, 2007.

Bradley D. Keazer,

Division Administrator, Hartford, Connecticut.

[FR Doc. 07-4127 Filed 8-21-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Sunshine Act Meetings; Unified Carrier Registration Plan Board of Directors

AGENCY: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

TIME AND DATE: October 4, 2007, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time.

PLACE: This meeting will take place telephonically. Any interested person may call Mr. Avelino Gutierrez at (505)