The project will proceed under a design and build procurement process. A consultant has been awarded the contract under the direction of the NMDOT. The preferred alternative and the focus of the project are the northbound I–25 to westbound PDN movement and the eastbound PDN to southbound I–25 movement as identified by the previous DEIS. These improvements are at the center of the proposed work and project development will proceed under the direction of the NMDOT. The preliminary engineering associated with the preferred alternative will be completed by the NMDOT’s consultant. The following elements must be completed prior to procuring a Design and Build contractor: (a) Identify and develop the right of way needs and mapping in order for the NMDOT to acquire the necessary rights of way. (b) Develop and obtain the necessary environmental documentation; it is currently anticipated that a Categorical Exclusion will be completed for the proposed improvements. Extensive public involvement will be part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). If necessary, an Environmental Assessment (EA) may be considered to complete the NEPA decision-making components. (c) Complete the required Interchange Access Change Request (IACR) to support the new interchange alternative.

The new interchange improvements will have to take into account the following: (a) There are improvements that will be required on both PDN and I–25. These improvements are not independent of each other. There are also improvements along the northbound and/or southbound I–25 and at the PDN/Jefferson intersection that will need to be in place before any of the interchange flyovers are constructed. (b) The alternative must demonstrate that it minimizes the features that do not fit into the project design (reduce sacrificial construction or roadway features that would be torn down during future phases). (c) The alternative must demonstrate that it improves the operation of I–25 as well as PDN and improves traffic flow in the roadway network surrounding the project area.

Finally, the project timelines indicate a preliminary engineering effort, including NEPA documentation, of 6–12 months. It is anticipated that construction would commence in June of 2013.

(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 proposed program.)

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J. Don Martinez.
Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

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