



Construction Project to Close Section of I-75 Freeway

Contact: Brenda V. Peek, Communications, MDOT Metro Region, 248-483-5109

Agency: Transportation

February 6, 2008 – Beginning Monday, February 25, 2008 until December 2009, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) will fully close a 1.5 mile section of the I-75 freeway from Rosa Parks Boulevard to Clark Street in Southwest Detroit.

During this 22-month period, MDOT will construct the final major phase of the MDOT Ambassador Bridge Gateway Project. This \$170 million investment in Michigan's infrastructure will ease traffic at the Detroit – Windsor border crossing, provide a direct connection from the Ambassador Bridge to I-75, I-96 and other area freeways. Once completed, the project will also improve safety by removing truck traffic from city streets near the bridge. Closing this 1.5 mile stretch of freeway will expedite the project, making it a less than 2-year, rather than a 4-year, undertaking.

"The Detroit-Windsor border handles \$115 billion in annual trade, making it the busiest international crossing in North America. The viability, efficiency, and safety of Michigan's border crossing network is crucial to Michigan's economy and the Country's economic well-being, now and in the future," said MDOT Director Kurt T. Steudle. "This phase of MDOT's Gateway Project is the largest single construction contract ever undertaken in any part of the State. It represents a major commitment by the Granholm administration to improve our border crossing network, grow Michigan's economy and retain and create jobs."

In order to prepare for closure of the 1.5 miles of I-75 from Rosa Parks Boulevard to Clark Street on Monday, February 25, MDOT is calling on the more than 11 million motorists who use this section of the freeway to find alternative routes in advance.

"From Monday, February 11 through Sunday, February 24, we're asking motorists to test drive MDOT's posted detour routes or to find their own best alternative routes around the construction area," said MDOT Region Engineer Greg Johnson. "We're asking the public to work with us so that safety and mobility will be maintained. We want everything to go as smoothly as possible on February 25 and throughout the construction of this important project."

To help motorists find their way around the construction site, MDOT is distributing 250,000 detour brochures with maps and directions at area businesses, public buildings and at the Ambassador Bridge toll plaza. Motorists can also download the brochure with maps from the MDOT Gateway Web site at www.michigan.gov/gateway. Once the project is underway, traffic information will be available from a variety of sources including local news and traffic information updates from WWJ 950 AM and other local media outlets. Real time traffic information will also be available on MDOT's Web site at www.michigan.gov/drive. For directions to specific destinations, motorists may wish to consider resources such as AAA and Mapquest.

In all, the MDOT Gateway Project will reconstruct sections of the I-75 and I-96 freeways and build or rehabilitate 18 ramps and 24 bridges in the area between Rosa Park Boulevard and Clark Street. The most prominent feature of the completed project will be a signature, cable-stay pedestrian bridge at Bagley Street that will span I-75 and I-96 to reconnect East and West Mexicantown. The two sides of that neighborhood were divided in the 1970's when I-75 and I-96 were built. The pedestrian bridge will lead tourists and residents alike directly to the newly constructed Detroit Mexicantown International Welcome Center and Mercado. This will enhance Detroit's \$5 billion annual tourist trade and bring visitors to Mexicantown and Southwest Detroit businesses.

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