

SUMMARY

This Environmental Assessment (EA) document presents the results of engineering and environmental studies conducted to construct a new bridge crossing over the Christina River in Wilmington, Delaware. The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) will be utilizing federal funds to construct this bridge and improve the roadway network in the Riverfront area. Therefore, this document has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and addresses additional Federal laws including: Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966; Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act; Clean Air Act as amended in 1990; Executive Order 12898 Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations; and Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act.

Five build alternatives were developed through preliminary planning and project development efforts. These were labeled Purple, Green, Orange A, Orange B and Red (**Figure 6**). As a result of engineering and environmental analysis three alternatives, Red, Green and Purple were determined to not meet purpose and need. This analysis of preliminary alternatives was presented to the agencies in March 2011 and to the public in May 2011.

DelDOT's Preferred Alternative (refer to **Figure S-1**) is the modified Orange B Alternative, which provides a skewed crossing of the River to take advantage of the state-owned parcel on the east bank just north of the James Court businesses. The Preferred Alternative was selected because it best meets the Purpose and Need for the project. This alternative utilizes state-owned parcel on the east bank minimizing business impacts along James Court, maximizes the redevelopment opportunities, expands the urban street grid, and improves regional circulation and traffic congestion during Riverfront events. At the same time the Orange B Alternative has minimal resource concerns; virtually no cultural resource issues or impacts; and very minor wetland and water impacts that will be addressed through the Corps of Engineers and Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Controls permitting process.

The EA document will be available for public review and comment in Spring 2012; followed by final design in 2012-2013, construction in 2013-2014, with the project opening in the Fall of 2015.

