

## FOREWORD<sup>1</sup>

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The World Trade Center Memorial and Redevelopment Plan (Proposed Action) was developed by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC), in cooperation with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (the Port Authority) as the owner of the World Trade Center (WTC). The Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) was approved and accepted as complete by the LMDC's Board of Directors on January 20, 2004 and published and distributed on January 22, 2004. Publication of the DGEIS marked the beginning of public review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). This Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) reflects public review and comments, responses to those comments, and ongoing planning efforts.

To begin the public review period the DGEIS was circulated to involved and interested agencies and other parties and posted on LMDC's web site, and notices of its availability and the public hearings were published in the Federal Register on January 23, 2004, the New York State Environmental Notice Bulletin on January 28, 2004, and in daily and neighborhood newspapers in between and around those two dates. LMDC also made available the Amended General Project Plan (GPP) for the World Trade Center Memorial and Cultural Program, which was approved by LMDC's Board on September 16, 2003. LMDC held two joint public hearings at Pace University in Manhattan to receive comments on the DGEIS and the GPP on February 18, 2004, and the public comment period on the DGEIS remained open through March 15, 2004. The public comment period on the Amended GPP remained open through March 19, 2004.

This FGEIS reflects all substantive comments made during public review, as well as changes to the Proposed Action that were made subsequent to the issuance of the DGEIS. Changes include refinement of the plan for Freedom Tower; selection of the Memorial design "Reflecting Absence" and refinements of that design to date; relocation of the Memorial Center and cultural facilities; changes in the Project Site plan to accommodate the proposed Permanent WTC PATH terminal (an independent project of the Port Authority); street direction changes developed in consultation with the Port Authority, New York State Department of Transportation, and New York City Department of Transportation; and more recent information on other proposed developments in the surrounding area.

In addition, the FGEIS includes and responds to all comments on the DGEIS received during the public review period and provides responses in a new chapter, Chapter 27, "Response to Comments on the DGEIS." Copies of the transcript of the February 18 public hearings and written comments received on the DGEIS are included in Volume 3, "Public Participation."

Where appropriate, the text of other chapters of this FGEIS has been revised in response to public comments or changes in the Proposed Action. These revisions (other than punctuation and other non-substantive changes) are indicated by *Futura Light Italic* type. \*

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<sup>1</sup> This chapter is new to the FGEIS.