

U.S.C. App. 2 § 1 et seq. The meeting is open to the public. Members of the public may present written or oral statements at the meeting. The agenda for the meeting will focus solely on discussion of the Houston Ship Channel 2000 (HSC 2000) report.

Dated: January 27, 1995.

R.C. North,

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, Eight Coast Guard District.

[FR Doc. 95-2994 Filed 2-6-95; 8:45 am]

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Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration

Environmental Impact Statement; Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties, Wisconsin

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT; Federal Transit Administration (FTA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA, the FTA, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) are issuing this notice to advise the public and all other interested parties that in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for transportation improvements in the central East-West Transportation Corridor of Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties, Wisconsin. The WisDOT will ensure that the EIS also satisfies the requirements of the Wisconsin Environment Policy Act (WEPA). The Draft EIS (DEIS) will include a Major Investment Study (MIS) in accordance with 23 Code of Federal Regulations part 450.

Among the alternatives that the EIS will evaluate are the No-Action and Transportation System Management (TSM) alternatives; light rail transit, freeway modernization, with and without special lanes for buses and carpools; and combinations of freeway modernization and fixed transit alternatives. Any new prudent and feasible alternatives generated through the Scoping process will also be considered.

Scoping will be accomplished through correspondence with interested persons, organizations, and federal, state and local agencies, and through two public meetings.

This notice supersedes the previous FTA Notice of Intent published in the **Federal Register** on March 27, 1992 (Vol. 57, No. 60, Page 10691).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Richard Schimelfenyg, Statewide

Projects Engineer, Federal Highway Administration, 4502 Vernon Boulevard, Madison, WI 53705-4905, phone (608) 264-5437, fax (608) 264-5959; Mr. Joel Ettinger, Regional Administrator, Federal Transit Administration, 55 East Monroe Street, Suite 1415, Chicago, Illinois 60603, phone (312) 353-2789, fax (312) 886-0351; or Mr. James Beckwith, Project Manager, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, District 2, 141 NW. Barstow Street, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53188, phone (414) 548-8675, fax (414) 548-8655.

COOPERATING AGENCIES: The FHWA, FTA and WisDOT have determined that the following agencies will be asked to be Cooperating Agencies in preparation of this EIS:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE),

U.S. Coast Guard (CG),

U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA),

U.S. Department of the Interior—National Park Service (NPS), and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Any other agency that believes it may have either jurisdiction-by-law or special expertise related to this project should consult with the individuals listed above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The central East-West Transportation Corridor is a major travel corridor bisecting Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties. The Corridor includes portions of seven cities: Brookfield, Glendale, Milwaukee, New Berlin, Waukesha, Wauwatosa, and West Allis; three villages: Elm Grove, Shorewood and West Milwaukee; and three towns: Brookfield, Pewaukee and Waukesha.

The central East-West Transportation Corridor study area is generally a corridor approximately four to six miles wide extending from the junction of State Trunk Highway (STH) 16 and Interstate Highway (IH) 94 in Waukesha County 18 miles easterly to downtown Milwaukee and Lake Michigan in Milwaukee County. The central East-West Transportation Corridor generally follows the east-west route of IH-94 and extends north at its eastern terminus to include the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee Campus and the near north shore communities adjacent to the City of Milwaukee.

While there are other East-West transportation corridors both north and south of the central transportation corridor, they do not directly serve the central business district of downtown Milwaukee, except by connections to north-south transportation corridors.

Transportation improvements in the central East-West Corridor are intended to improve accessibility in the corridor. A substantial portion of the corridor is largely composed of a low income, non-white, and transit-dependent population. Improved transportation should better serve the bidirectional travel needs of the area's growing employment base and population. Transit and highway improvements would also reduce traffic congestion, improve travel safety, and reduce accidents. Improved transportation operations in the corridor may alleviate regional air quality problems by providing alternatives to the single occupant automobile for many trips. Further, improved transit may alleviate traffic and parking problems that prevail in some of the most densely populated portions of the corridor and assist in opportunities for improved land use patterns and jobs development. In light of the above factors, the purpose of the central East-West Corridor study is to identify the best approach for improving long term transportation service in the corridor in a cost-effective, equitable, and publicly acceptable manner.

Previous Activity

As noted earlier, on March 27, 1992 the FTA announced through a Notice of Intent in the **Federal Register** that an Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement (AA/EIS) would be prepared for transit improvements in the East-West Corridor in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties. During the alternatives analysis reasonable and promising alternatives including technology type, alignment, and location of train storage yards and a maintenance center, were evaluated according to FTA criteria. Twelve alternatives were developed and presented at public meetings, Technical Advisory Committee meetings, and Study Advisory Committee meetings. After FTA approval, the twelve alternatives were being evaluated in an AA/DEIS (that was not circulated). These twelve alternatives included the No Build and Transportation System Management (TSM) alternatives, high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes for buses and carpools, express and rapid light rail transit (XLRT and RLRT), rapid busway (RBUS), minimum length routes for both LXRT and RLRT, and combinations of all modal alternatives described above.

In late 1993, a committee of local mayors, county executives, village presidents, and state and regional transportation officials, known as the Study Advisory Committee, identified Alternative 12 as their preliminary

recommendation, while deferring the selection of specific route and station location until the next stage of study, preliminary engineering. The Alternative 12 concept included:

- 17 miles of busway or special lanes for carpools and buses parallel to IH 94 between downtown Milwaukee and the City of Waukesha,
- 16 miles of light rail transit extending from Glendale through downtown Milwaukee to the County Grounds in western Milwaukee County, and a
- 30% increase in metro area bus service split equally between Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties.

While Alternative 12 appeared to be the concept that best addressed the needs of the corridor, there were issues and concerns about specific route options for light rail and the busway. It became apparent that more detailed work would be required on the exact alignments of light rail transit and special lanes as well as their benefits, costs, and impacts before a locally preferred alternative could be recommended.

Concurrent with the AA/EIS study, the WisDOT was evaluating alternatives for modernization of the IH 94 corridor in Waukesha and Milwaukee Counties, including reconstruction of the Zoo, Stadium, and Marquette interchanges. The IH 94 modernization studies were considered as part of the No Build scenario in the AA/EIS. However, the IH 94 modernization studies had to consider how transit alternatives presented in the AA/EIS would affect design alternatives.

In order to be consistent with recent rule changes to 23 CFR part 450, the FTA, FHWA, WisDOT and the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (the metropolitan planning organization, or MPO, for the region) agreed that the IH 94 modernization studies and the East-West Corridor transit studies be combined in a Draft EIS and Major Investment Study (DEIS/MIS).

The DEIS/MIS will address issues concerning specific route options, alignments, and location of special lanes for potential transit facilities and will also define and evaluate IH 94 highway improvements. The scope of work and alternatives proposed for evaluation in the DEIS/MIS are consistent with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's recently endorsed Translinks 21 statewide transportation plan as well as the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's Regional Transportation System Plan, adopted on December 7, 1994.

Among the alternatives that the DEIS/MIS will evaluate are the No-Action and Transportation System Management (TSM) alternatives; light rail transit, freeway modernization, with and without special lanes for buses and carpools; and combinations of freeway modernization and fixed transit alternatives. Any new prudent and feasible alternatives generated through the Scoping process will also be considered.

Scoping will be accomplished through correspondence with interested persons, organizations, and federal, state and local agencies and two public Scoping meetings. Written comments on the scope of alternatives and the type of impacts to be considered should be sent to WisDOT by March 16, 1995.

FHWA, FTA and WisDOT invite interested individuals, organizations, and federal, state and local agencies to participate in defining the alternatives to be evaluated in the MIS/EIS and identifying any significant social, economic, or environmental issues related to the alternatives.

An information packet describing the purpose of the project, the proposed alternatives, the impact areas to be evaluated, the citizen involvement program, and the preliminary project schedule is being mailed to affected federal, state and local agencies and to interested parties on record. Others may request the Scoping materials by contacting Mr. James Beckwith at the address listed above.

Scoping comments may be made verbally at any of the public Scoping meetings or in writing. Scoping comments should focus on identifying specific social, economic or environmental impacts to be evaluated and suggesting alternatives which are less costly or less environmentally damaging while achieving similar transportation objectives. Scoping is not the appropriate time to indicate a preference for a particular alternative. Comments on preferences should be communicated after the DEIS/MIS has been completed. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list to receive further information as the project develops, contact Mr. James Beckwith at the address listed above.

Probable Effects

FHWA, FTA and WisDOT plan to evaluate in the EIS all significant social, economic and environmental impacts of the alternatives. Among the primary issues are transportation service changes, including transit cost, service, patronage change, and its financial implications; the effect on traffic movement and railroad operations;

community impacts, including land use planning and zoning compatibility, neighborhood compatibility, local and regional economic change, aesthetics, and utility relocation; cultural resource impacts, including effects on historic, archeological, and park resources; and natural resource impacts, including air quality, noise and vibration, removal of pre-existing hazardous wastes, and effects on water resources and quality, natural features, and ecosystems. The proposed impact assessment and its evaluation criteria will take into account both positive and negative impacts direct and indirect impacts, short-term (construction) and long-term (operation) impacts, and site-specific and corridor-wide impacts. Evaluation criteria will be consistent with the applicable Federal, State of Wisconsin, and local standards, criteria, regulations, and policies. Mitigation measures will be explored for any adverse impacts that are identified as part of the analysis.

FHWA/FTA Procedures

In accordance with the Federal Aid Highway Act and FHWA policy, and the Federal Transit Act, as amended, and FTA policy, the DEIS/MIS will be prepared in conjunction with an analysis of alternatives and initial Preliminary Engineering. After its publication, the DEIS/MIS will be available for public and agency review and comment, and a public hearing will be held. On the basis of the DEIS/MIS and the comments received, WisDOT will select a locally preferred alternative for its major investment strategy. The Regional Transportation System Plan and Transportation Improvement Program will be revised to incorporate the selected strategy. Detailed Preliminary Engineering and preparation of a Final EIS will be completed following FHWA and FTA approval.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction; 20.500, Federal Transit Capital Improvement Grants; and 20.507, Federal Transit Capital Operating Assistance Formula Grants. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Issued on: January 27, 1995.

Richard Schimelfenyg,

Statewide Projects Engineer, FHWA.

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