

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.

[FR Doc. 95-2882 Filed 2-6-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M