evaluate the No Build, and a Light Rail Transit alternative (including highway improvements and transportation management solutions) in the I–25 Southeast Corridor study limits from Broadway to Lincoln Avenue, which includes I–225 from I–25 to Parker Road, and determine the estimated costs and potential impacts associated with each. CDOT will be the local lead agency for the preparation of the EIS. The EIS also will satisfy the requirements of the 1999 Clean Air Act Amendments. Scoping will be accomplished through coordination with affected parties, organizations, federal, state and local agencies and through three public meetings which will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the following locations and dates:

Tuesday, March 31, 1998, Castlewood Public Library, 6739 South Uinta Street, Denver, CO 80112

Thursday, April 2, 1998, Most Precious Blood Catholic School, 2250 South Harrison, Denver, CO 80210

Tuesday, April 7, 1998, Hebrew Educational Alliance, 3600 South Ivanhoe, Denver, CO 80237

A 45-day scoping period will begin on March 4, 1998 and conclude on April 17, 1998. Written comments on the scope of the alternatives and impacts to be considered must be received by CDOT by April 17, 1998.

Written comments on project scope should be sent to:

Mr. Robert Sakaguchi, Region 6 Planning and Environmental Manager CDOT, 2000 South Holly Street, Denver, CO 80222 Telephone: (303) 757–9818

or

Mr. John Basner, Region 6 South Area Program Engineer, CDOT, 2000 South Holly Street, Denver, CO 80222, Telephone: (303) 757–9387

FHWA, FTA, CDOT, and other local agencies invite interested individuals, organizations, and federal, state and local agencies to participate in defining the alternatives to be evaluated in the 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 areas to be evaluated, the citizen involvement program, and the preliminary project schedule will be developed. These scoping materials may be requested by contacting Mr. Robert Sakaguchi, Region 6 Planning and Environmental Manager, or Mr. John Basner, Region 6 South Area Program Engineer, at the address and phone numbers above. Scoping comments may be made verbally at the public scoping meetings or in writing. The public will receive notices on location and time of the scoping meetings through newspaper advertisements and individual correspondence.

To ensure that a full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list to receive further information as the project develops, contact Mr. Robert Sakaguchi, or Mr. John Basner, as previously described.

The proposed action is consistent with the recently completed Southeast Corridor Major Investment Study. It begins at approximately I–25 and Broadway and proceeds south and southeast to Lincoln Avenue following the general alignment of I–25. Also included is a segment along I–225 from I–25 to Parker Road. The proposed action excludes any proposed roadway improvements near I–25 from 6th Avenue to approximately the Logan Street crossing, including the I–25 interchanges at Alameda, Santa Fe, and Broadway. Transit and highway improvements are intended to alleviate traffic congestion in the Southeast Corridor, address safety problems and help achieve regional air quality goals by providing an alternative to the single occupant vehicle.

The alternatives to be evaluated include the following. The No-Build alternative will serve as the baseline for environmental analysis and consists of the existing transit and highway systems and all projects contained in the federally approved Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Denver metropolitan area. The Light Rail Transit (LRT) alternative will generally use the I–25 right-of-way between Broadway and Lincoln Avenue, and the I–225 right-of-way between I–25 and Parker. This alternative, designed to accommodate future transportation needs, also includes improvements to the highway, transportation systems management, and pedestrian facilities in the study area.

FHWA, FTA, and CDOT will evaluate all significant social, economic, and environmental impacts of the alternatives. The primary areas of examination will include transit ridership, the capital outlays needed to construct the recommended alternative, the cost of operating and maintaining facilities created by the project, and the financial requirements on the funding agencies. Environmental and social impacts to be evaluated in the analysis include land use and neighborhood impacts, traffic and parking impacts near stations, visual impacts, hazardous material impacts, impacts on cultural and paleontological resources, and noise and vibration impacts. Impacts on natural areas, threatened and endangered species, air and water quality, groundwater, and geological forms will also be covered. The impacts will be evaluated both for the construction period and for the long-term period of operation. Measures to mitigate significant adverse impacts will be developed.

In accordance with the Federal Transit Act, as amended, and FHWA and FTA policy, the draft EIS will be prepared with required engineering design studies necessary to complete the document. After its publication, the draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment, and a public hearing will be held. On the basis of the Draft EIS and the comments received, a preferred alternative will be selected and preparation of the Final EIS and Record of Decision will proceed.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: February 5, 1998.

Ronald A. Speral,

Environmental/ROW Program Manager Colorado Division

Federal Highway Administration, Lakewood, Colorado.

Louis F. Mraz, Jr.,

Regional Administrator,

Federal Transit Administration, Region VIII

Denver, Colorado.

[FR Doc. 98–3409 Filed 2–10–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Additional Interchanges to the Interstate System

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of policy statement.

SUMMARY: This document issues a revision of the FHWA policy statement regarding requests for added access to the existing Interstate system. The policy includes guidance for the justification and documentation needed for requests to add access (interchanges and ramps) to the existing Interstate System. The policy statement was

originally issued in the **Federal Register** on October 22, 1990 (55 FR 42670).

DATES: The effective date of this policy is February 11, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Seppo I. Sillan, Federal-Aid and Design Division, Office of Engineering, (202) 366–0312, or Mr. Wilbert Baccus, Office of Chief Counsel, (202) 366–0780, Federal Highway Administration, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington DC 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 111 of title 23, U.S.C., provides that all agreements between the Secretary and the State highway department for the construction of projects on the Interstate System shall contain a clause providing that the State will not add any points of access to, or exit from, the project in addition to those approved by the Secretary in the plans for such project, without the prior approval of the Secretary. The Secretary has delegated the authority to administer 23 U.S.C. 111 to the Federal Highway Administrator pursuant to 49 CFR 1.48(b)(10). A formal policy statement including guidance for justifying and documenting the need for additional access to the existing sections of the Interstate System was published in the **Federal Register** on October 22, 1990 (55 FR 42670).

The FHWA has adopted the AASHTO publication ''A Policy on Design Standards—Interstate System'' as its standard for projects on the Interstate System. This publication provides that access to the Interstate System shall be fully controlled by constructing grade separations at selected public crossroads and all railroad crossings. Where interchanges with selected public crossroads are constructed, access control must extend the full length of ramps and terminals on the crossroad.

Summary of Changes

The changes in the policy statement are being made to reflect the planning requirements of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA, Pub. L. 102–240) as implemented in 23 CFR part 450, to clarify coordination between the access request and environmental processes, and to update language at various locations. The following specific revisions are made to the existing policy statement:

1. An additional sentence is added to item 5 under ''Policy'' that ensures requests for new or revised access are consistent with 23 CFR part 450 and 40 CFR parts 51 and 93.

2. Text in item 5 pertaining to future interchange additions has been moved to item 6 because it covers a different subject.

3. Item 6 is redesignated as item 7.

4. A new item 8 is added so that those reviewing the access request have the information necessary to process the request.

5. The fifth paragraph under ''Application'' is revised to clarify coordination with the environmental process.

The revised policy statement also includes various editorial changes to enhance clarity and readability. The revised policy statement is as follows:

Policy

It is in the national interest to maintain the Interstate System to provide the highest level of service in terms of safety and mobility. Adequate control of access is critical to providing such service. Therefore, new or revised access points to the existing Interstate System should meet the following requirements:

1. The existing interchanges and/or local roads and streets in the corridor can neither provide the necessary access nor be improved to satisfactorily accommodate the design-year traffic demands while at the same time providing the access intended by the proposal.

2. All reasonable alternatives for design options, location and transportation system management type improvements (such as ramp metering, mass transit, and HOV facilities) have been assessed and provided for if currently justified, or provisions are included for accommodating such facilities if a future need is identified.

3. The proposed access point does not have a significant adverse impact on the safety and operation of the Interstate facility based on an analysis of current and future traffic. The operational analysis for existing conditions shall, particularly in urbanized areas, include an analysis of sections of Interstate to and including at least the first adjacent existing or proposed interchange on either side. Crossroads and other roads and streets shall be included in the analysis to the extent necessary to assure their ability to collect and distribute traffic to and from the interchange with new or revised access points.

4. The proposed access connects to a public road only and will provide for all traffic movements. Less than ''full interchanges'' for special purpose access for transit vehicles, for HOV's, or into park and ride lots may be considered on a case-by-case basis. The proposed access will be designed to meet or exceed current standards for Federal-aid projects on the Interstate System.

5. The proposal considers and is consistent with local and regional land use and transportation plans. Prior to final approval, all requests for new or revised access must be consistent with the metropolitan and/or statewide transportation plan, as appropriate, the applicable provisions of 23 CFR part 450 and the transportation conformity requirements of 40 CFR parts 51 and 93.

6. In areas where the potential exists for future multiple interchange additions, all requests for new or revised access are supported by a comprehensive Interstate network study with recommendations that address all proposed and desired access within the context of a long-term plan.

7. The request for a new or revised access generated by new or expanded development demonstrates appropriate coordination between the development and related or otherwise required transportation system improvements.

8. The request for new or revised access contains information relative to the planning requirements and the status of the environmental processing of the proposal.

Application

This policy is applicable to new or revised access points to existing Interstate facilities regardless of the funding of the original construction or regardless of the funding for the new access points. This includes routes incorporated into the Interstate System under the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 139(a) or other legislation.

Routes approved as a future part of the Interstate system under 23 U.S.C. 139(b) represent a special case because they are not yet a part of the Interstate system and the policy contained herein does not apply. However, since the intention to add the route to the Interstate system has been formalized by agreement, any proposed access points, regardless of funding, must be coordinated with the FHWA Division Office. This policy is not applicable to toll roads incorporated into the Interstate System, except for segments where Federal funds have been expended, or where the toll road section has been added to the Interstate System under the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 139(a).

For the purpose of applying this policy, each entrance or exit point, including ''locked gate'' access, to the mainline is considered to be an access point. For example, a diamond

interchange configuration has four access points.

Generally, revised access is considered to be a change in the interchange configuration even though the number of actual points of access may not change. For example, replacing one of the direct ramps of a diamond interchange with a loop, or changing a cloverleaf interchange into a fully directional interchange would be considered revised access for the purpose of applying this policy.

All requests for new or revised access points on completed Interstate highways must be closely coordinated with the planning and environmental processes. The FHWA approval constitutes a Federal action, and as such, requires that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures are followed. The NEPA procedures will be accomplished as part of the normal project development process and as a condition of the access approval. This means the final approval of access cannot precede the completion of the NEPA process. To offer maximum flexibility, however, any proposed access points can be submitted in accordance with the delegation of authority for a determination of engineering and operational acceptability prior to completion of the NEPA process. In this manner, the State highway agency can determine if a proposal is acceptable for inclusion as an alternative in the environmental process. This policy in no way alters the current NEPA implementing procedures as contained in 23 CFR part 771.

Although the justification and documentation procedures described in this policy can be applied to access requests for non-Interstate freeways or other access controlled highways, they are not required. However, applicable Federal rules and regulations, including NEPA procedures, must be followed.

Implementation

The FHWA Division Office will ensure that all requests for new or revised access submitted by the State highway agency for FHWA consideration contain sufficient information to allow the FHWA to independently evaluate the request and ensure that all pertinent factors and alternatives have been appropriately considered. The extent and format of the required justification and documentation should be developed jointly by the State highway agency and the FHWA to accommodate the operations of both agencies, and should also be consistent with the complexity and expected impact of the proposals. For example, information in support of isolated rural interchanges may not need to be as extensive as for a complex or potentially controversial interchange in an urban area. No specific documentation format or content is prescribed by this policy.

Policy Statement Impact

The policy statement, first published in the **Federal Register** on October 22, 1990 (55 FR 42670), describes the justification and documentation needed for requests to add or revise access to the existing Interstate System. The revisions made by this publication of the policy statement reflect the planning requirements of the ISTEA as implemented in 23 CFR part 450, clarify coordination between the access request and environmental processes, and update language at various locations. The States will have to take these factors into consideration when making future requests for new or revised access points, but the overall effort necessary for developing the request will not be significantly increased.

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 315; 49 CFR 1.48.

Issued: February 4, 1998.

Kenneth R. Wykle,

Administrator, Federal Highway Administration.

[FR Doc. 98–3460 Filed 2–10–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

[Notice 97–1]

Safety Advisory: Unauthorized Cargo Tanks Used to Transport Hazardous Materials

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This is to notify the public that certain specification DOT 407 and DOT 412 cargo tank motor vehicles manufactured by Prairie State Equipment, doing business as Petro Steel, in Mitchell, SD, are not authorized for the transportation of hazardous materials unless the original accident damage protection devices have been modified to improve their structural strength. Failure of these devices during a collision could result in serious injury, death, and property damage.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Bill Quade, Office of Motor Carrier Safety and Technology, (202) 366–0476; Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590–0001. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Cargo tanks represented, marked, certified, or sold for use in the bulk transportation of hazardous materials must conform with the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR) (49 CFR 171–180). Specification DOT 407 and DOT 412 cargo tanks are authorized to transport numerous hazardous materials including flammable liquids (e.g., toluene), poisonous liquids, (e.g., pesticides), corrosive liquids (e.g., sulfuric acid), and others. Due to the risk of transporting these types of materials in bulk, the DOT 407 and DOT 412 cargo tank specifications require these tanks to be protected from damage during rear-end or rollover accidents. Requirements concerning the size and strength of these accident damage protection devices are set forth in § 178.345–8.

During a compliance review of Prairie State Equipment, doing business as Petro Steel, in Mitchell, SD, the FHWA discovered that rollover protection devices and rear-end protection devices as manufactured and installed on some cargo tanks did not meet the requirements of the DOT specifications. Since these tanks were not equipped with adequate accident damage protection devices required by the specifications, they may not be represented as specification cargo tanks and may not be used to transport hazardous materials which require a specification cargo tank. Specifically, as manufactured by Petro Steel, the rollover damage protection devices installed on the following cargo tanks did not meet the requirements of the specifications:

Vehicle identification No./serial No.	DOT specification	Design type
93115	DOT 407	CVA–5–TM
1P9TAR203R2021217	DOT 407	CVT–25
1P9TAR208R2021214	DOT 407	CVT–25
1P9TAR20XS2021219	DOT 407	CVT–25