

mutually satisfactory solution to the impasse on the river crossing could be reached. Over a period of four months, an independent review of the proposed project was performed, including extensive discussions and meetings with the key individuals and organizations involved and public meetings with the St. Croix River Crossing Advisory Group. The Advisory Group was made up of representatives from regulatory agencies, local units of government, and other interested organizations; including, environmental groups, historic preservation groups and Chambers of Commerce. The facilitation process concluded that a new four-lane bridge was required to satisfy the project need and recommended a new alignment with less impact on the river.

The proposed improvements consist of a four-lane bridge on a new alignment approximately 800 meters north of the Final EIS Preferred Alternative alignment. It is proposed to be constructed using a below deck arch bridge type. This proposed alternative is the only new alternative that will be evaluated in the supplemental EIS process.

An Amended Scoping Decision Document will be published in February 1999. A press release will be published to inform the public of the document's availability. Copies of the Amended Scoping Decision Document will be distributed to agencies, interested persons and libraries. No formal scoping meeting is planned.

Coordination has been initiated and will continue with appropriate Federal, State and local agencies, and private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have an interest in the proposed action. Public meetings have been held in the past and will continue to be held, with public notice given for the time and place of the meetings.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

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

Issued on: January 11, 1999.

Stanley M. Graczyk,

Project Development Engineer, Federal Highway Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

Environmental Impact Statement for the North Shore-CBD Transportation Corridor in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (the Federal co-lead agencies) and the Port Authority of Allegheny County (the local lead agency), in cooperation with the City of Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for transportation improvements in the North Shore-Central Business District (CBD) Corridor in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The EIS is being prepared in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and will also satisfy the requirements of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA).

The City of Pittsburgh and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission (SPRPC) initiated the North Shore/CBD Transportation Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) in Fall 1997. Under the MIS, a long list of road and transit alternatives were generated and analyzed for their physical feasibility and ability to serve the needs of the corridor. This list was screened to a short list of alternatives which will be analyzed under the EIS.

The EIS will evaluate a No-Build Alternative, a Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative which includes enhanced bus service and pedestrian facilities, and the Build Alternatives which would include one or more of the following transportation projects: two Intermodal Transportation Centers (ITC's), a ramp from an ITC to a highway, a people mover system including a possible low-speed Maglev technology, and an extension of Port Authority's existing light rail transit line into the North Shore.

DATES: Comment Due Date: Written comments on the scope of the alternatives and impacts to be considered must should be sent to Port

Authority by February 19, 1999. Public Scoping Meetings will be held on Tuesday, February 2, 1999 at 12:00 and at 6:00 p.m. at the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, 31st Floor. See **ADDRESSES** below.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the project scope should be sent to Mr. Bruce W. Ahern, Assistant General Manager of Business Development and Planning, Port Authority of Allegheny County, 2235 Beaver Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15233. Two Public Scoping Meetings will be held at the following location: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, 31st Floor; 425 Sixth Avenue in Downtown Pittsburgh, 15219. See **DATES** above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John Garrity, Federal Transit Administration, Region III, (215) 656-7100 or Anthony L. Mento, Federal Highway Administration, Pennsylvania Division, (717) 221-3461.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Scoping

The FTA, FHWA, and the Port Authority invite interested individuals, organizations, and federal, state, and local agencies to participate in establishing the purpose, scope, framework, and approach for the environmental analysis of the alternatives and identifying any significant social, economic, or environmental impacts to be evaluated. At the two Scoping Meetings, presentations will be made which will provide a description of the proposed scope of the study as well as a plan for an active citizen involvement program, a work schedule, and an estimated level of effort and detail of the analysis. Scoping comments may be made at the Public Scoping Meeting or in writing within thirty days after publication of this notice. See the "Scoping Meetings" under the **DATES** and **ADDRESSES** sections above for locations and times.

The Scoping Meeting will begin with an "open house" where attendees will be able to view graphics and discuss the project with staff involved in the study. A presentation on the project will be given at 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., followed by an additional opportunity for questions and answers. Scoping material will be available at the meeting or in advance of the meeting by contacting Mr. David E. Wohlwill, Project Manager at (412) 237-7338. A sign language interpreter will be available for the hearing impaired. A TDD number (412) 231-7007 is also available. The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities.

II. Description of the Study Area and Project Need

The corridor extends roughly from 13th Street in the Strip District, through the Golden Triangle between Liberty Avenue and Fort Duquesne Boulevard, and into the North Shore from the Fort Wayne Railroad Bridge to the West End Bridge south of I-279 and Route 65. Recently, this area has experienced new development and redevelopment such as the Western Pennsylvania History Center, the Cultural District, Andy Warhol Museum, new Alcoa Headquarters, and Lincoln Housing. Significant new development is proposed or underway including expansion of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, new hotels, the O'Reilly Theater, PNC Ballpark, new Steelers Stadium, Carnegie Science Center expansion, a North Shore amphitheater, new parking facilities, and new retail and office development. The vision is to expand Downtown from its traditional Golden Triangle confines across the Allegheny River into the North Shore.

This corridor experiences significant congestion during peak periods and when there is an event at Three Rivers Stadium. Demand for parking exceeds supply, a condition which will be exacerbated when some land presently being used for parking will be developed for other purposes. The North Shore area is perceived as difficult to access. Improved transportation facilities will be required to support new development in the corridor. Transit linkages between the major attractions need to be improved.

III. Alternatives

The following describes the No-Build, TSM, and Build Alternatives that were evaluated in the MIS and are being presented for further study in the North Shore/CBD Transportation Corridor DEIS:

1. No-Build Alternative—Existing transit service and programmed new transportation facilities with level of transit service expanded as appropriate to meet projected year 2020 travel demand.

2. TSM Alternative—Enhanced bus service including: high-frequency shuttle bus service connecting the major attractions and hotels in the corridor; routing of regional bus services through the North Shore; and a network of regional express buses serving Steelers and Pirates events. To ensure service reliability and improve bus speeds, exclusive bus lanes and bus priority treatments are proposed for periods of high congestion (i.e., post-game events).

New pedestrian facilities linking the North Shore with adjacent communities are also included in this alternative.

3. Build Alternatives: The set of build alternatives being considered in the DEIS include the following:

a. Intermodal Transportation Centers—Two Intermodal Transportation Centers (ITC's) are proposed: one at Federal and General Robinson Streets (ITC #1) and the other near Reedsdale Street and Allegheny Avenue (ITC #2). These would be high-capacity (2,000+) parking garages connected by a rapid transit line to the Golden Triangle.

b. Roadway Improvement—A ramp from ITC #1 to Route 28.

c. People Mover Gateway Alignment—Automated people-mover operating primarily on elevated guideways using vehicles with rubber tires or low-speed Maglev technology. This alignment begins at Fifth and Liberty Avenues, traverses Cecil Way, crosses over Fort Duquesne Boulevard, extends across the Allegheny River on a new bridge, and terminates at ITC #1.

d. People Mover Fort Wayne Alignment—Automated people-mover operating primarily on elevated guideways using vehicles with rubber tires or low-speed Maglev technology. This alignment begins at the Steel Plaza LRT Station, uses a portion of the Penn Park Line, crosses the Allegheny River either on the lower deck of the Fort Wayne Railroad Bridge or on a new bridge just east of the Fort Wayne Bridge and then turns west to terminate at ITC #1.

e. LRT Gateway Alignment—This alignment extends from the existing Gateway LRT Station in the Golden Triangle in a subway under the Allegheny River to a station at or near ITC #1 and then west to the Carnegie Science Center and ITC #2.

f. LRT Fort Wayne Alignment—This alignment connects with the existing LRT system at the Steel Plaza Station, uses a portion of the Penn Park Line and crosses the Allegheny River on either the lower deck of the Fort Wayne Railroad Bridge or a new bridge just east of the Fort Wayne Bridge, and turns west to ITC #1 and further west to ITC #2.

IV. Probable Effects

The FTA, FHWA, and Port Authority will evaluate all significant environmental, social, and economic impacts of the alternatives analyzed in the EIS. Primary environmental issues include: land use, neighborhood enhancement, parklands, traffic and parking, visual impacts and aesthetics, archeological, cultural and historic

resources, navigation impacts of new river crossings, and geotechnical issues associated with tunnels. Other issues to be considered are floodplains, wildlife and vegetation including endangered species, safety, air and water quality, hazardous wastes, displacements, and energy impacts. The impacts will be considered for both construction and operating and maintaining the new facilities. Measures to mitigate any adverse impacts will be developed for consideration.

V. FTA Procedures

In accordance with the federal transportation planning regulations (23 CFR Part 450) and the federal environmental impact regulations and related procedures (23 CFR 771), the Draft EIS will be prepared to include an evaluation of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the alternatives. The DEIS will consider the public and agency comments received. Port Authority, in concert with the City of Pittsburgh, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and other affected agencies will select the preferred alternative. Then Port Authority, as the lead agency, will continue with the preparation of the Final EIS. Opportunity for additional public comment will be provided throughout all phases of project development.

Issued on: January 14, 1999.

Sheldon A. Kinbar,

Regional Administrator, Federal Transit Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33693]

RailTex, Inc., Mid-Michigan Railroad, Inc., Michigan Shore Railroad, Inc., and Grand Rapids Eastern Railroad, Inc.—Corporate Family Transaction Exemption

RailTex, Inc. (RailTex),¹ Mid-Michigan Railroad, Inc. (MMRR), Michigan Shore Railroad, Inc. (MS), and Grand Rapids Eastern Railroad, Inc. (GRE), have jointly filed a verified notice of exemption. MS and GRE will be merged into MMRR with MMRR being the surviving corporation. After consummation of the transaction,

¹ RailTex is a noncarrier which directly controls 22 Class III railroads operating in 22 states, as well as 3 rail carriers that operate in Canada.