

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.
John C. Hoyle,
Secretary of the Commission.
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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

23 CFR Chapter I

[Docket No. OST-98-4146]

Outreach on the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21); Meetings Regarding Environmental Streamlining, Transportation Enhancements and Environmental Justice

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Announcement of public meetings; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) announces a series of information exchange meetings to discuss how to implement provisions of TEA-21 (Pub. L. 105-178, 112 Stat. 107) relative to environmental streamlining (three meetings) and transportation enhancements (three meetings). There will also be a series of four information exchange meetings on environmental justice and the implementation of TEA-21. These meetings are part of the outreach sessions the DOT is holding around the country on the implementation of TEA-21.

The FHWA has not completed scheduling all of the meetings. Locations, subject, and dates for the meetings are as follows:

Kansas City, MO, transportation enhancements, September 29, 1998
 Washington, DC, environmental streamlining, October 9, 1998
 Oakland, CA, transportation enhancements, October 13, 1998
 Atlanta, GA, environmental justice, October 14, 1998
 Chicago, IL, environmental streamlining, October 15, 1998
 Harlem, NY, environmental justice, October 27, 1998
 Washington, DC, transportation enhancement, date to be determined in October 1998
 San Francisco, CA, environmental justice, November, 11, 1998
 Seattle, WA, environmental justice, date to be determined in November 1998
 West Coast Location, environmental streamlining, date to be announced

DATES: Comments must be submitted to the docket on or before November 22, 1998.

Meeting Dates and Times

The Kansas City, MO, meeting on transportation enhancements will be held on September 29, 1998, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., c.t. The Washington, DC, meeting on environmental streamlining will be held on October 9, 1998, from noon to 5:00 p.m., e.t. The Oakland, CA, meeting on transportation enhancements will be held on October 13, 1998 from noon to 5:00 p.m., p.t. The Atlanta, GA, meeting on environmental justice will be held on October 14, 1998 from noon until 5:00 p.m., e.t. The Chicago, IL, meeting on environmental streamlining will be held on October 15, 1998 from noon until 5:00 p.m., c.t. The Harlem, NY, meeting on environmental justice will be held on October 27, 1998 from noon until 5:00 p.m., e.t. The San Francisco, CA, meeting on environmental justice will be held on November 11, 1999 from noon until 5:00 p.m., p.t.

Specific times and locations for the Seattle, WA, meeting on environmental justice in November 1998 and the west coast meeting on environmental streamlining in October or November will be announced at a later date through the TEA-21 website at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/outreach.htm>. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact Leslie Wright-Small who is listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section below.

ADDRESSES: FOR DOCKETS: All signed, written comments should refer to the docket number in the heading of this document. Since the docket contains comments on many provisions of TEA-21, there should be a clear identification of which provisions are being commented on. Comments must be sent to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. All comments received will be available for public examination at this address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Persons who wish notification of the receipt of their comments must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard.

FOR MEETINGS: Please contact the appropriate individual meeting contact as listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: *TEA-21 Outreach:* Ms. Leslie Wright-Small, HPP 20, Room 3318, (202) 366-9227, Office of Policy Development, 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.

For Individual Meetings: For environmental streamlining: Mr. Fred Skaer, HEP 30, (202) 366-0106; for transportation enhancements: Mr. Harold Peaks, HEP 30, (202) 366-0106; and for environmental justice: Mr. Wendell Stills, HEP 30, 366-0106, all located at 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:

Electronic Access

Internet users can access all comments received by the U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, by using the universal resource locator (URL): <http://dms.dot.gov>. It is available 24 hours each day, 365 days each year. Please follow the instructions online for more information and help.

An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded using a modem and suitable communications software from the Government Printing Office's electronic Bulletin Board Service at (202) 512-1661. Internet users may reach the **Federal Register's** home page at: <http://www.nara.gov/fedreg> and the Government Printing Office's database at: [http://www/access.gpo.gov/nara](http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara).

Background

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) was signed into law on June 9, 1998. Prior to implementing this legislation, the DOT is consulting with its partners and customers through a series of TEA-21 outreach sessions/meetings. The FHWA is responsible for conducting the meetings described in this notice.

For more information about other TEA-21 outreach sessions and meetings, please visit our website at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/outreach.htm>. For the text of TEA-21 (Public Law 105-178) as well as a summary and fact sheets on its provisions, please visit our website at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/legis.htm>. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact Leslie Wright-Small who is listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section above.

Meeting Purpose and Format

Information exchange meetings are opportunities for the transportation community to speak to the DOT on specific issues related to TEA-21. At each of the information exchange meetings covered by this

announcement, a DOT official will moderate a discussion by up to 25 participants on a series of specific TEA-21 implementation issues identified by the DOT as well as by participants. Proceedings will be recorded by notetakers who will prepare meeting summaries. The format emphasizes discussion and interaction by the participants with remarks limited to 5 minutes on a given topic. Lengthy statements should be sent directly to the docket (see ADDRESSES section above).

Meeting Participants

Since space is limited in this sort of interactive meeting and a broad spectrum of viewpoints is desired, the DOT will directly invite the participation of individuals and organizations with a known interest in the subject of each information exchange meeting. There will be limited numbers of additional places available. If you wish to attend an information exchange meeting, please call the appropriate contact from the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section above to register for available places on a first come basis. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

As remaining meeting dates and places are scheduled, the DOT will post them on the TEA-21 website at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/outreach.htm>. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact Leslie Wright-Small who is listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section above.

Environmental Streamlining Meetings

The three sessions on environmental streamlining will be held in Washington, DC on October 9, 1998, in Chicago, IL on October 15, 1998 and at a West Coast location to be determined. They are concerned with what the language of TEA-21 means relative to environmental streamlining and how the DOT should implement these provisions of the Act: through regulations, guidance, or perhaps administering directly from the statutory language. Under TEA-21, the Secretary of Transportation will establish a coordinated environmental review process for the DOT to work with other Federal agencies in ensuring that major highway and transit projects are advanced according to cooperatively determined time frames. The new process will use concurrent, rather than sequential, reviews and will allow States to include their environmental reviews in it. The Act also authorizes the Secretary to approve State requests to provide funding to affected Federal agencies to meet established time limits.

If the Secretary finds that a project-related environmental issue has not been resolved with another Federal agency, the heads of the agencies will meet within 30 days to resolve the issue. In addition, the Act contains provisions relating to the applicability of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) with respect to transportation planning, consultant selection, design/build contracting, transportation infrastructure financial innovation and high priority projects. The DOT seeks discussion on how it should implement these provisions.

Transportation Enhancements Sessions

The three sessions on transportation enhancements will be held in Kansas City, MO on September 29, 1998, in Oakland, CA on October 13, 1998, and in Washington, DC on a date to be set sometime in October. They are concerned with what the language of TEA-21 means relative to transportation enhancements and how the DOT should implement these provisions of the Act: through regulations, guidance, or perhaps administering directly from the statutory language. Under TEA-21, transportation enhancements continue to be funded with a 10 percent setaside from Surface Transportation Program funds but with new innovative financing alternatives for meeting matching requirements. New provisions allow States to transfer some of their transportation enhancement funds to other programs and expand the list of activities eligible for transportation enhancement funds. Newly eligible are safety education activities for pedestrians and bicyclists, establishment of transportation museums, and projects to reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality. Provision of tourist and welcome center facilities is included under the existing activity, "scenic or historic highway programs."

Environmental Justice Sessions

The four sessions on environmental justice will be held in Atlanta, GA on October 14, 1998, in Harlem, NY on October 27, 1998, in San Francisco, CA on November 11, 1998 and in Seattle, WA at a date in November to be determined. They will explore the implications for implementing TEA-21 of Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, and the implementing DOT Order on Environmental Justice. TEA-21 does not have specific environmental justice provisions. However, the DOT seeks discussion on how to avoid

disproportionate impacts on minority and low income populations in carrying out the extensive provisions of TEA-21. In addition, the DOT wishes discussion of how to include the traditionally underserved in transportation decisions under TEA-21. Through these meetings, the DOT is pursuing a deeper understanding of how to infuse environmental justice considerations into the new TEA-21 initiatives to improve safety, protect and enhance communities and the natural environment and advance America's economic growth through efficient and flexible transportation.

Contributing Views

There are three ways for you to contribute your views on how to implement the provisions of TEA-21 relating to environmental streamlining and transportation enhancements as well as on environmental justice and the implementation of TEA-21. You may attend one of the meetings and participate in the discussions, you may hand in written comments at a meeting, or you may mail comments to the docket the DOT has established for TEA-21 outreach. See the **ADDRESSES** section above for the docket address.

You may use one or more of any of these methods. Since attendees at the meetings will be asked to limit their remarks on a topic to 5 minutes to accommodate a maximum number of persons, commenting directly to the docket is particularly useful for comments which are too long or detailed for convenient oral presentation at a meeting or when you are not able to attend a meeting.

What Happens Next

Comments in the docket and information exchange meeting summaries will be forwarded to the element of the DOT responsible for the relevant provisions of TEA-21. Oral and written comments will be equally considered in decisionmaking on how to implement TEA-21. If the DOT decides to pursue implementing a provision of TEA-21 by issuing regulations, it will then initiate formal rule making under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 315.

Issued on: September 24, 1998.

Thomas Ptak,

Associate Administrator for Program Development.

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