

and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

A. Jane Bradley,

Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Monitoring and Enforcement.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

Environmental Impact Statement on the Proposed Commuter Rail Project Between Tacoma and Lakewood, Washington

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority (Sound Transit) intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Sound Transit will ensure that the EIS also satisfies the requirements of the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The FTA will be the NEPA lead agency. Sound Transit will be the SEPA lead agency.

The EIS will evaluate the Tacoma-Lakewood Commuter Rail Project, including station locations, a light maintenance and layover facility location, park-and-ride facility alternatives, and track design variations along an approximately 11-mile long corridor between Tacoma and just south of Lakewood, Washington. The project will generally be located in existing Burlington Northern Santa FE Railway (BNSF) and Tacoma Eastern (TE) rights-of-way. A short new rail connection will be needed to connect the BNSF and TE lines proposed to be used for the project. The EIS will evaluate route alternatives for this new at-grade track, which will be approximately 0.8 miles long. The EIS will evaluate the no-build alternative and any new reasonable alternatives within the corridor generated through the scoping process. Corridor alternatives were evaluated in a SEPA plan-level EIS (1993) and in a federally required Major Investment Study (1997).

The proposed Commuter Rail Project is intended to provide peak-hour commuter rail service between Tacoma and Lakewood, key activity centers along the corridor. The commuter rail line will extend the proposed Tacoma-Seattle commuter rail service. It will

connect to the Tacoma Light Rail Transit line. It will also connect ultimately, with the proposed Central Light Rail Transit line between SeaTac and Seattle, Washington.

The project was originally the subject of a proposed environmental assessment (EA) under NEPA. FTA and Sound Transit determined that preparation of a NEPA EIS is appropriate after reviewing information developed through the public involvement and preliminary environmental review processes. The Commuter Rail facility at the Tacoma Dome Station was evaluated in a separate EA for which a Finding of No Significant Impact was issued on April 6, 1999. The EIS also will evaluate alternatives and impacts for a related Sound Transit project to provide additional parking capacity in the vicinity of, or at the existing, SR512 Park-and-Ride Lot in Lakewood.

Scoping will be accomplished through correspondence with interested persons, organizations, and federal, state, regional and local agencies. A public scoping meeting will be held. See **DATES** below for details.

DATES: *Comment Due Date:* Written comments on the scope of alternatives and impacts to be considered should be sent to Sound Transit by August 10, 1999. See **ADDRESSES** below. Oral comments should be made at the public scoping meeting scheduled below. *Scoping Meeting Dates:* Public scoping meetings will be held on the following days and locations:

Monday, July 26, 1999 South Park Community Center, 4851 South Tacoma Way, Tacoma, 5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 27, 1999 Pierce Transit Lakewood Training Center, Colonial Center, 6132 Motor Avenue, Lakewood, 5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

The locations for the scoping meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. People with special needs (such as individuals needing a language translator) should contact Sound Transit at the address below or by calling (206) 398-5000. A TDD number is also available: (206) 398-5086.

The scoping meetings will be held in an "open-house" format. Project representatives will be available to discuss the project throughout the entire meeting. Informational displays and written materials will also be available throughout the entire meeting. In addition to written comments, which may be made at the meeting or as described below, individual oral comments will be recorded at the meeting.

ADDRESSES: *Written comments on the project scope should be sent to:*

Desmond Brown, SEPA Responsible Official, Sound Transit, 1100 Second Avenue, Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98101-3423; fax number (206) 398-5222.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Theresa Morse, Federal Transit Administration, Region X, 915 Second Avenue, Room 3142, Seattle, WA 98174; phone number: (206) 220-7964.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Scoping

The FTA and Sound Transit invite interested individuals, organizations, and federal, state, regional, and local agencies and tribal governments to participate in defining the alternatives relating to the track alignment and corridor improvements, commuter rail parking, expanded park-and-ride lot capacity for Sound Transit Express, Pierce Transit and Intercity Transit bus services, and light maintenance and layover facility and in identifying any significant, social, economic, or environmental issues related to the alternatives. Scoping comments may be made orally at the public scoping meeting or in writing. See **DATES** above for location and time, and see the **ADDRESSES** section above for written comments. During scoping, comments should focus on identifying specific social, economic, or environmental impacts to be evaluated and suggesting alternatives that are more cost-effective or have fewer environmental impacts while achieving similar transportation objectives.

Scoping materials will be available at the scoping meetings or in advance of the meetings by contacting Sound Transit at (206) 398-5000. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list to receive further information as the project proceeds, please contact the following at Sound Transit: John L. Hubbard, AICP at (253) 581-8137.

II. Description of Study Area and Project Need

The Tacoma-Lakewood Commuter Rail Project consists of an approximately 11 mile long rail corridor between Tacoma and just south of Lakewood, Washington. The project will include a group of physical and operational improvements to existing tracks and rights-of-way, along with station facilities and systems in order to provide commuter rail service. Service is expected to operate during peak commute periods, with a total of 9 train trips in each direction. Trains will consist of 4 to 10 passenger cars pulled by a diesel locomotive.

The commuter rail facility at the Tacoma Dome station is proposed to serve the project. Proposed improvements to that facility are the subject of separate environmental review. Two additional commuter rail stations will be developed as part of this project to serve the South Tacoma and Lakewood communities and the surrounding areas. Stations are proposed at the following locations: South Tacoma and Lakewood.

Station improvements will generally consist of a platform(s) that conforms to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) train boarding and debarking requirements. The platforms will have overhead canopies, wind screens, and pedestrian railings. Bus access will be provided at all stations. In addition, parking facilities will be provided. The proposed South Tacoma station will include park-and-ride facilities for 200 to 250 vehicles. The proposed Lakewood station will include park-and-ride facilities for up to 2,000 vehicles, which could include both commuter rail parking and expanded park-and-ride capacity for Sound Transit Express, Pierce Transit and Intercity Transit (Olympia Express) bus services.

Track and other right-of-way improvements will be made to allow commuter rail to operate along the corridor, all of which is used for freight operations. In addition, a new 0.8 mile rail connection will be constructed in order to connect the BNSF and TE rights-of-way for commuter rail use. A new siding will also be constructed to connect the mainline to the light maintenance and layover facility. The EIS will analyze alternative locations and designs for such facilities to minimize or avoid adverse environmental impacts.

The proposed commuter rail project will provide an alternative to the automobile in the congested Interstate 5 (I-5) corridor. Project need is described in the Documentation of Major Investment Study, Sound Transit, March 12, 1997. This document is available from Sound Transit by calling (206) 398-5000.

III. Alternatives

The proposed Tacoma-Lakewood Commuter Rail Project would largely be implemented in existing BNSF and TE railroad rights-of-way, except for new trackage needed to connect the existing rail lines and the proposed station and parking facilities. Alternatives relating to alignment location and mode were previously considered and documented in the state environmental review (1993) and Major Investment Study (1997). The

prior planning history and plan-level screening of alternatives will be summarized. This EIS will be project-specific and will focus on alternative station and associated parking facility locations, and alternative locations and/or designs for improved and new track facilities that minimize or avoid adverse environmental impacts.

Station locations and alternatives proposed for study in the EIS are located in South Tacoma and Lakewood. The South Tacoma and Lakewood station locations will each include the development of associated park-and-ride facilities. Space for approximately 200 to 250 vehicles will be developed in conjunction with the South Tacoma station. Space for up to 2,000 vehicles may be developed as part of the Lakewood station.

In addition to stations, other track improvements will be made to allow operation of commuter rail in a freight corridor. These railroad track improvements may also be used in the future by state-funded high speed passenger rail service, which is separate from Sound Transit commuter rail service.

The No-Build alternative, which involves no change to transportation services or facilities in the corridor beyond those currently programmed, will also be evaluated in the EIS.

IV. Probable Effects/Potential Impacts for Analysis

The FTA and Sound Transit plan to evaluate in the EIS all significant, social, economic and environmental impacts of the alternatives. The EIS is being prepared largely to evaluate the potential environmental impacts on natural resources associated with track improvements and the construction of new stations and associated park-and-ride facilities, and the new rail right-of-way that will be used to connect the BNSF and TE lines. Other environmental and social impacts proposed for analysis include land use and neighborhood impacts, traffic and parking impacts near stations, traffic circulation, visual impacts, contaminated soils, health and safety impacts, impacts on historic, cultural and archaeological resources, impacts on utilities, and noise and vibration impacts. The impacts on natural areas, rare and endangered species, and earth, air and water quality, will also be covered. The impacts will be evaluated both for the construction period and for the long-term period of operations. Reasonable measures to mitigate adverse impacts will be identified.

V. FTA Procedures

The EIS process will assess the social, economic, and environmental impacts of alternative station locations and associated park-and-ride facilities, a light maintenance and layover facility, the development of a new railroad right-of-way that will connect the existing BNSF and TE lines, and track designs to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts. A draft EIS will be published and made available for public and agency review and comment, and public hearing(s) will be held. On the basis of the draft EIS and the comments received, Sound Transit will complete the final EIS.

Issued on: June 15, 1999.

Linda M. Gehrke,

Deputy Regional Administrator.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Fiscal Service

Surety Companies Acceptable on Federal Bonds: Termination—Vesta Fire Insurance Corporation

AGENCY: Financial Management Service, Fiscal Service, Department of the Treasury.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This is Supplement No. 13 to the Treasury Department Circular 570; 1998 Revision, published July 1, 1998, at 63 FR 36080.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Surety Bond Branch at (202) 874-7102.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice is hereby given that the Certificate of Authority issued by the Treasury to the above named Company, under the United States Code, Title 31, Sections 9304-9308, to qualify as an acceptable surety on Federal bonds is terminated effective today.

The Company was last listed as an acceptable surety on Federal bonds at 63 FR 36112, July 1, 1998.

With respect to any bonds currently in force with above listed Company, bond-approving officers should secure new bonds with acceptable sureties in those instances where a significant amount of liability remains outstanding. In addition, bonds that are continuous in nature should not be renewed.

The Circular may be viewed and downloaded through the Internet at <http://www.fms.treas.gov/c570/index.html>. A hard copy may be purchased from the Government Printing Office (GPO), Subscription Service, Washington, DC, telephone