

archaeological and cultural resources; parklands and recreation areas; visual and aesthetic qualities; neighborhoods and environmental justice; air quality; noise and vibration; contaminated materials; ecosystems; water resources; energy; construction impacts; safety and security; finance; and transportation impacts. The impacts will be evaluated both for the construction period and for the long-term operation of each alternative. Measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate any significant adverse impacts will be identified.

V. FTA Procedures

FTA and GRTA invite comments on the content of the EIS related to the proposed project in order to ensure that the full range of issues and concerns of the public, interested parties, and federal, state, and local agencies are addressed. Comments are invited from all parties and should be directed to the name listed in the **ADDRESSES** section above within the time frame set forth in the **DATES** section above.

In accordance with the federal transportation planning regulations (23 CFR part 450) and the federal environmental impact regulations and related procedures (23 CFR part 771), the DEIS will be prepared to include an evaluation of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the alternatives. Upon completion, the DEIS will be available for public and agency review and comment. Public hearing(s) will be held on the DEIS within the study area. The DEIS will also constitute the Alternatives Analysis required by the New Starts regulations.

The Final EIS will consider comments received during the DEIS public review process and will identify the preferred alternative.

Issued on: May 9, 2002.

Jerry Franklin,

Regional Administrator, Atlanta, Georgia.

[FR Doc. 02-12124 Filed 5-14-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

Environmental Impact Statement for the Spokane Regional Light Rail (South Valley Corridor) Project in Spokane, Washington Metropolitan Area

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Spokane Transit Authority (STA), and the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for transit improvements in Spokane County, between downtown Spokane and Liberty Lake. The EIS will be prepared to satisfy both NEPA and the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). This project was originally scoped as an Environmental Assessment (EA), with one build Alternative. Recently, conditions have changed with an additional build alternative being considered. Therefore, it has been determined that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is more suitable for the project.

The purpose of this Notice of Intent is to notify interested parties of the intent to prepare an EIS, the addition of a second build alternative for consideration and to invite participation in the study. The project proposes to implement a major high capacity rail transit improvement in the Spokane Metropolitan area that maintains livability, manages growth and provides a balanced transportation system. The Proposed Action is intended to contribute to implementation of a series of state, regional, and local planning policies that address air quality, sprawl, and growth. Three alternatives (described below) will be evaluated in the EIS.

DATES: The public is welcome to make comments on the scope of the proposed project. Written comments should be sent to the Spokane Transit Authority within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice in the local newspaper or June 18, 2002, whichever is later. A packet on the proposed project, project alternatives and the scoping process may be obtained from the Spokane Transit Authority. The information may also be obtained through a public website for the project, www.spokanelightrail.com. A *Public Open House/Scoping Meeting* will be held on Tuesday June 4, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. PDT, at the Spokane County Valley Library, 12004 East Main Avenue, Spokane, WA 99206. An *Agency Scoping Meeting* will be held at 2:30 p.m. PDT on Tuesday, June 4, 2002, at the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) Board Room, 1230 West Boone Avenue, Spokane, WA 99201. Both meeting locations are accessible to persons with disabilities. Any individual with a disability who requires special assistance, such as a sign language interpreter, should contact Gerylyn

Garberg at (509) 325-6000, ext. 196 or email ggarberg@spokanetransit.com, at least 48-hours in advance of the meeting in order for STA to make necessary arrangements.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Spokane Transit Authority Agency Coordination contact is Greg Northcutt, Project Director at (509) 325-6056 or e-mail gnorthcutt@spokanetransit.com. The STA Public Information contact is Molly Myers, Public Involvement Manager at (509) 325-6090 or e-mail mmyers@spokanetransit.com. The STA TDD number is (509) 456-4327. Written comments should be sent to Greg Northcutt, Project Director, Spokane Transit Authority, 1230 West Boone Ave., Spokane, WA 99201.

The Federal agency contact is F. William Fort, Federal Transit Administration, 915 Second Avenue, Suite 3142 Jackson Federal Building, 915 Second Avenue, and Seattle, WA 98174. Phone (206) 220-4461.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Notice of Intent

This Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS is being published to notify interested parties. The Spokane South Valley Corridor Project is examining two high capacity rail transit build alternatives and a no-build alternative in the south valley portion of the Spokane metropolitan area. Because the study is a transit alternatives study, FTA regulations and guidance will be used for the analysis and preparation of the South Valley Corridor Project EIS.

2. Study Area

The South Valley Corridor includes an area roughly parallel to I-90 running east through downtown Spokane, southeast Spokane, unincorporated urban Spokane County, and into the City of Liberty Lake. The proposed alternatives primarily utilize existing right-of-ways along operational and former railroad corridors and roadways.

3. Alternatives

Three alternatives will be evaluated in the EIS. The No-Build Alternative will provide the basis for comparison of the build alternatives. The No-Build Alternative includes the existing transportation system plus projects listed in the Spokane Metropolitan Area Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The Separate Rail Alignment Alternative includes a light rail transit line running from downtown Spokane to Liberty Lake on an exclusive alignment. The new Shared Rail Alignment includes a light rail line from downtown Spokane to Liberty Lake

sharing existing rail lines with the Union Pacific Railroad along portions of the alignment. This alternative would use operating time restrictions to separate light rail traffic from heavy rail traffic. Between the two termini there would be intermediate stations and associated local parking. Both the separate rail alignment and shared rail alignment Build Alternatives may use either electrified or diesel multiple unit (DMU) vehicle technology. These alternatives will also incorporate in-street operations along Riverside Avenue, between Post Street and Division Street. The rail options will utilize the former Milwaukee Road rail corridor, east of University Road.

4. Probable Effects

FTA and Spokane Transit Authority will evaluate the environmental, social and economic impacts of the alternatives and measures to mitigate any adverse impacts.

Dated: May 9, 2002.

Blas M. Uribe,

Acting Regional Administrator, FTA Region 10.

[FR Doc. 02-12122 Filed 5-14-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

Pipeline Safety: Development of Consensus Standards on Pipeline Public Awareness Programs

AGENCY: Office of Pipeline Safety, Research and Special Programs Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of development of consensus standards.

SUMMARY: Trade associations for the natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline industry are working together to develop consensus standards to expand the public awareness programs that pipeline operators conduct, and to further involve the local communities in ensuring pipeline safety. This notice provides information about how the public can participate in this consensus standard-setting process. The Research and Special Program Administration's (RSPA) Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) is committed to improving the public education programs that are a part of the pipeline safety public awareness programs. Public participation is being sought as part of this standard-setting for industry public awareness programs,

with the expected result of improved public education regarding pipeline safety.

Background

Current Federal regulations require that pipeline operators conduct public education campaigns so that members of the public, excavators, residents along pipeline rights-of-way, emergency responders and local officials understand what to do in a pipeline emergency. OPS has encouraged pipeline operators to review existing programs and to make needed improvements. The National Transportation Safety Board has also issued a recommendation urging that gas and hazardous liquid pipeline operators increase public education about pipeline safety operations.

In response to concerns raised by RSPA, the American Petroleum Institute (API) has initiated a revision of its Recommended Practice (RP) 1123, Development of Public Awareness Programs. This document was originally issued for use by API members which transport petroleum and other hazardous liquids. However, the need for public education standards extends beyond hazardous liquid operators. To promote a standardized approach to public education among pipeline operators, OPS encouraged natural gas pipeline operators to work with their colleagues in the liquid pipeline industry on the API revision of recommended practice. The recommended practice, upon completion of this consensus standard-setting process, will be assigned a new ANSI identification number, and will be referred to in that manner in all future correspondence.

The Interstate Natural Gas Association of America, the American Gas Association and the American Public Gas Association have joined API in this effort. This collaborative process will bring a measure of consistency to such programs throughout the industry, and will expand the effort to include public education not solely of pipeline operators, but of all relevant stakeholders. However, this revised recommended practice would apply to existing pipelines only.

RSPA is interested in the success of this effort because OPS had already begun work in the area of public education. In the fall of 2000, at the request of the OPS Technical Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Safety Standards Committee (THLPSSC), OPS formed a group with equal representation from government, industry and public sectors

to explore this issue. OPS also held a well-attended public meeting in February 2001 to solicit input on the information needs of the public and other audiences.

The revision of the recommended practice will provide guidelines that operators can use to develop or improve existing public awareness and community outreach programs. In advance of this revision, API surveyed a number of its members to determine the effectiveness of existing public awareness programs and to identify areas which required improvement. The results of this survey are being used to help guide the revision of the recommended practice, which is expected to be complete by the end of 2002.

The API has created a Web site, <http://www.api.org/pipelinepublicawareness> to obtain informal, early feedback and to solicit public input. OPS hopes that the public will take this opportunity to provide its comments. It is important to note that the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) will also provide the opportunity for formal Notice and Comment on the revision of the recommended practice. OPS urges interested parties to submit their remarks on the completed revision to ANSI.

OPS, as the Federal government representative, and the National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR), the body representing the State pipeline safety agencies, are participating in this process as observers. After industry has finalized the revision, OPS will decide whether or not to adopt it as a regulatory requirement. Alternatively, OPS may adopt only those portions of the document that meet its needs. While OPS has encouraged this process, the decision on whether to adopt this standard has not been pre-determined. If OPS decides to incorporate the revised recommended practice by reference, a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking will be published in the **Federal Register** for public comment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mary-Jo Cooney, OPS, (202) 366-4774, regarding the subject matter of this notice.

Issued in Washington, DC, on May 10, 2002.

Jeffrey D. Wiese,

Manager, Program Development, Office of Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 02-12168 Filed 5-14-02; 8:45 am]

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