Department of Transportation (TxDOT). It is being developed in three segments with each segment having logical termini and independent utility. FHWA and TTA will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for each of the three independent segments.

This Notice of Intent (NOI) focuses on the northern segment, Segment A, of State Highway 130 and supersedes an NOI issued by the FHWA on January 5, 1995. As announced herein, the FHWA in cooperation with TTA will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on a proposal to construct the Segment A of State Highway 130. Segment A of proposed State Highway 130 extends from the junction of Interstate 35 and State Highway 195 north of Georgetown in Williamson County, Texas, to U.S. Highway 290 east of Austin in Travis County, Texas. The length of Segment A varies depending on the selected alternative, from approximately 41.5 kilometers (25.7 miles) to 46.6 kilometers (28.9 miles). The proposed action is intended to relieve congestion on Interstate 35 by providing an alternative route for those who commute between Austin and surrounding areas as well as drivers desiring to bypass the central business areas of Austin, Round Rock and Georgetown. The proposed action will also provide improved access and increased mobility to urbanized areas in the proposed corridor, help support planned business and residential growth in various areas throughout the project corridor, and provide needed freeway access from surrounding areas to the proposed Austin Bergstrom International Airport.

A Major Investment Study, addressing the entire length of the proposed State Highway 130, was adopted in July 1997 by the Austin Transportation Study Policy Advisory Committee, the metropolitan planning organization for the Austin, Texas area.

As currently envisioned the proposed Segment A facility will be a controlled access toll road; thus, in conjunction with the EIS and selection of a preferred alternative, the TTA will conduct a toll feasibility study to evaluate the viability of developing the selected alternative as a toll road and financing it, in whole or part, through the issuance of revenue bonds. The toll road designation will not influence the selection of a preferred alternative. Proposed alternatives, including alternative alignments, will be evaluated for how well they meet the stated purpose and need for the proposed project. Any impacts owing to the toll road designation will be discussed in the environmental impact statement.

The draft EIS for Segment A will address a build alternative including multiple alternative alignments. Alternatives to the proposed action, which will also be discussed in the EIS, will include (1) taking no action, or the ''no build'' alternative, and (2) improving existing roadways in the project area. The build alternatives include multiple alternative alignments along new location rights-of-way connecting Interstate 35 to U.S. Highway 290.

Impacts caused by the construction and operation of Segment A of State Highway 130 will vary according to the alternative alignment utilized. Generally, impacts would include the following: transportation impacts (construction detours, construction traffic, and mobility improvement); air and noise impacts from construction and operation of the roadway; water quality impacts from construction areas and roadway stormwater runoff; impacts to waters of the United States including wetlands from right-of-way encroachment; and impacts to residents and businesses.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments have been sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed interest in the proposal. Public meetings for the Segment A project were held on October 25, 1994, at Everett Williams Elementary School in Georgetown, Texas; on October 27, 1994, at Manor High School in Manor Texas; on April 9, 1996, at Bluebonnet Trail Elementary School in Austin, Texas; on July 15, 1997, at Park Crest Middle School in Pflugerville, Texas; and on July 17, 1997, and February 3, 1998, at Hopewell Middle School in Round Rock, Texas. At these meetings, public comments on the proposed action and alternatives were requested. In addition, a public hearing will be held after publication of the Draft EIS. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the hearing. The Draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearing.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to proposed Segment A of State Highway 130 are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA or TTA at the address provided above.

(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.)

Walter C. Waidelich,

District Engineer.

[FR Doc. 98–23853 Filed 9–3–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4901–22–M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

Environmental Impact Statement on the Proposed Resort Corridor Fixed Guideway Project Between Cashman Field, Las Vegas, NV and McCarran International Airport, Clark County, NV

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

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

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as Federal lead agency, and the Regional Transportation Commission of Clark County (RTC), as local lead agency, intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) on a proposal by RTC to further study the proposed implementation of a fixed guideway (urban rail) system within a corridor, known as the Resort Corridor, 9 miles long and 4 miles wide between Cashman Field in the City of Las Vegas and McCarran International Airport in Clark County.

The EIS will evaluate the following alternatives adopted as part of the fixed guideway element of the Transportation Master Plan for the Resort Corridor as defined in the Resort Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS), Final Evaluation Report, dated October 9, 1997; (1) The Fixed Guideway Element Initial Operating Segment (IOS). This alternative includes an elevated fixed guideway system 5.2 miles long, 10 fixed guideway stations, a supporting bus transit system element, and is also known as Phase 1 of the Report Corridor Transportation Master Plan. (2) The Fixed Guideway Element Core System. This alternative includes an elevated fixed guideway system 15.6 miles long, 27 fixed guideway stations, and a supporting bus transit system element. (3) The Fixed Guideway Element Core System with an extension along Harmon Avenue to McCarran International Airport. This alternative includes an elevated fixed guideway system 18.4 miles long, 31 fixed guideway stations, and a supporting bus transit system element. (4) The Fixed Guideway Core System with an extension along Tropicana Avenue to McCarran

International Airport. This alternative includes an elevated fixed guideway system 18.0 miles long, 28 fixed guideway stations, and a supporting bus transit system element. (5) A No Build alternative, which involves no change to transportation services or facilities in the Resort Corridor beyond already committed projects. Potential new feasible alternatives or revisions to the above alternatives generated through the scoping process will also be considered.

Scoping will be accomplished through correspondence with interested persons, organizations, and Federal, State, and local agencies; and two public scoping meetings.

DATES: Comment Due Date: Written comments on the scope of the alternatives and impacts to be considered should be submitted by October 16, 1998. Written comments should be sent to Mr. Lee Gibson, Planning Manager, RTC, 301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 300, Las Vegas, NV 89101. Written comments may also be made at the public scoping meetings scheduled below: The public scoping meetings will take place on: (1) Tuesday, September 22, 1998 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Cashman Field and (2) Tuesday, September 29, 1998 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Clark County Flamingo Library. See **ADDRESSES** below.

People with special needs should contact Lee Gibson at RTC at the address below or by calling (702) 455–4481. The buildings in which the scoping meetings will be conducted are accessible to people with disabilities.

The meetings will be held in an ''open-house'' format, and representatives will be available to discuss the project throughout the time periods given. Information displays and written material will also be available throughout the time periods given.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to Mr. Lee Gibson, Planning Manager, RTC, 301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 300, Las Vegas, NV 89101. Written comments may also be made at the public scoping meetings scheduled below. The Scoping Meetings will take place at the following locations: (1) Tuesday, September 22, 1998 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Cashman Field, 850 Las Vegas Boulevard North, Las Vegas, NV 89101 and (2) Tuesday, September 29, 1998 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Clark County Flamingo Library, 1401 E. Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, NV 89119.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Lee Gibson, Planning Manager, RTC, 301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 300, Las Vegas, NV 89101, (702) 455–4481, or fax (702) 455–2937.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Scoping

FTA and RTC invite interested individuals, organizations, and Federal, State, and local agencies to participate in defining the fixed guideway and supported bus system 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 results of the Resort Corridor major Investment Study, the Transportation Master Plan for the Resort Corridor, the purpose of the project, the project location, the proposed alternatives, and the impact areas to be evaluated is being mailed to affected Federal, State, and local agencies. Other interested parties may request the scoping materials by contacting Mr. Lee Gibson, Planning Manager, RTC, 301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 300, Las Vegas, NV 89101, (702) 455–4481, or fax (702) 455–2937. Scoping comments may be made in writing at the public scoping meetings. See the Scoping Meeting section above for the locations and times. During scoping, comments should focus on identifying specific social, economic, or environmental impacts to be evaluated and suggesting alternatives that are less costly or less environmentally damaging while meeting the identified mobility needs. Scoping is not the appropriate time to indicate a preference for a particular alternative. Comments on the preferences should be communicated after the Draft EIS has been completed. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list to receive further information as the project develops, contact: Mr. Lee Gibson, Planning Manager, RTC, 301 E. Clark Avenue, Suite 300, Las Vegas, NV 89101, (702) 455–4481, or fax (702) 455–2937.

II. Description of Study Area and Project Need

The study area, called the Resort Corridor, is bounded on the north by Washington Avenue, on the east by Maryland Parkway and Eastern Avenue, on the south by Windmill Lane, and on the west by Valley View Boulevard. The Resort Corridor is approximately 9 miles long and 4 miles wide and represents approximately 10 percent of the urbanized Las Vegas Valley land area. The Resort Corridor encompasses the geographical center and the economic focal point of the Las Vegas metropolitan area with 50 percent of the region's employment.

The study corridor contains the key activity, employment, and transportation facilities in the Las Vegas area such as: the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, Cashman Field and Convention Center, downtown Las Vegas, Downtown Transit Center, Clark County and City of Las Vegas government office complexes, Federal office buildings, Fremont Street Experience, major hospital complexes, 90,000 plus hotel rooms (The Strip), three major regional shopping centers, Las Vegas Convention Center, University of Nevada at Las Vegas (UNLV), Thomas and Mack Center, South Resort Corridor Transit Center, and McCarran International Airport.

This EIS is the logical next step in transportation planning and project development following RTC's completion of a Major Investment Study (MIS) of the mobility needs in the study area. This MIS employed a far-reaching public involvement program, continuous coordination with affected and interested agencies and community stakeholders, and a detailed evaluation of a wide range of alternatives to meet the mobility needs identified in the MIS. The following findings of need in the Resort Corridor over the 20-year planning period were identified and guided the development and evaluation of the alternatives for the MIS:

- Between 1995 and 2020 the number of jobs in the Resort Corridor will increase from 238,000 (50 percent of the region's jobs) to 492,000 (44 percent of the region's jobs).
- Between 1995 and 2020 the region's population will increase from 950,000 to almost 2 million (over 100 percent increase).
- Between 1995 and 2020 the full implementation of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) will increase roadway capacity by only 27 percent. During this same period, demand for vehicle travel will increase approximately 54 percent.
- Should the community attempt to provide for mobility in its traditional manner of building streets, highways, and freeways to accommodate the travel demand, the equivalent of 20 east-west and 18 north-south arterial lanes of roadways will have to be built in the Resort Corridor. Such arterial lanes would be added to the roadway projects already programmed in the RTP.
- The RTP will consume all existing roadway rights-of-way and will complete the roadway infrastructure improvement program for the Resort Corridor. If new roadway construction, or widening of existing travel ways, is to occur beyond those identified in the

RTP, additional right-of-way will have to be acquired.

- Regional vehicle travel, especially residential trips to and from work in the Resort Corridor, contribute significantly to the travel demands placed on the Resort Corridor's roadways.
- Regional utilization of public bus transit (Citizens Area Transit or CAT) increased 175 percent between 1993 and 1997. Attempting to solve the roadway congestion conditions in the Resort Corridor solely by expanding the ridership on CAT will be virtually impossible unless substantial infrastructure improvements are also implemented to increase the ability of buses to operate on the roadways.
- Meeting the mobility demands within the Resort Corridor will require the establishment of a multi-modal, fully integrated set of transportation solutions.
- Travel volumes, land use densities, and employment concentration will warrant the consideration of establishing a higher order of public transit that operates in a separate right-of-way.
- Programs directed at reducing the amount of travel in private vehicles and encouraging the use of public transit within the Resort Corridor and between the Resort Corridor and the remainder of the community are needed.

The MIS process developed a number of alternatives to address the above statement of needs. Detailed analysis at a conceptual engineering level was completed for a set of multi-modal alternatives to identify cost, ridership, cost-effectiveness measures, and environmental benefits and impacts. The results led to the development and adoption of a Transportation Master Plan for the Resort Corridor that includes four components: a fixed guideway element, an enhanced bus program, a transportation demand management element, and a street and highway element along with the adoption of a Phase 1 fixed guideway element and supporting bus system component. This EIS focuses on the fixed guideway element and the supporting bus system component.

III. Alternatives

The EIS will evaluate the following alternatives adopted as part of the fixed guideway element of the Transportation Master Plan for the Resort Corridor as defined in the Resort Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS), Final Evaluation Report, dated October 9, 1997: (1) The Fixed Guideway Element Initial Operating Segment (IOS). This alternative includes an elevated fixed guideway system 5.2 miles long, 10 fixed guideway stations, a supporting bus transit system element, and is also known as Phase 1 of the Resort Corridor Transportation Master Plan. (2) The Fixed Guideway Element Core System. This alternative includes an elevated fixed guideway System 15.6 miles long, 27 fixed guideway stations, and a supporting bus transit system element. (3) The Fixed Guideway Element Core system with an extension along Harmon Avenue to McCarran International Airport. This alternative includes an elevated fixed guideway system 18.4 miles long, 31 fixed guideway stations, and a supporting bus transit system element. (4) The Fixed Guideway Core System with an extension along Tropicana Avenue to McCarran International Airport. This alternative includes an elevated fixed guideway system 18.0 miles long, 28 fixed guideway stations, and a supporting bus transit system element. (5) A No Build alternative, which involves no change to transportation services or facilities in the Resort Corridor beyond already committed projects. In addition, special consideration will be given to evaluating three alternative technology groups for the elevated fixed guideway system. These technologies include light rail transit (LRT), automated guideway transit (AGT), and large monorail transit systems. Potential new feasible alternatives or revisions to the above alternatives generated through the scoping process will also be considered.

IV. Probable Effects

FTA and RTC will evaluate, in the EIS, all significant social, economic, and environmental impacts of the alternatives. The previous MIS study evaluated these impacts at level of detail sufficient to adopt the components of the Transportation Master Plan and to identify the alternatives and issues to be addressed in the EIS. Among the primary transit issues to be evaluated in the EIS are the expected increase in transit ridership including visitor trips and residents trips, the expected increase in mobility for the transit dependent population, the support of the region's air quality goals, the economic benefits, satisfying the overall transportation needs of the Resort Corridor, the capital outlays needed to construct the project, the cost of operating and maintaining the facilities created by the project, the impacts of any private urban transit-grade fixed guideway projects, and the financial impacts on the funding agencies. Potentially affected environmental and social resources proposed for further analyses and re-evaluation in the EIS include, land use and neighborhood impacts, residential and business displacements and relocations, traffic and parking impacts near stations and along the alignments, visual impacts, noise and vibration impacts, major utility relocation impacts, and impacts on cultural and archaeological resources. Impacts on air quality, water quality, and hazardous waste sites 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 considered.

V. FTA Procedures

The EIS alternatives with conceptual engineering detail and the Preliminary Engineering level of detail for the Phase 1, Initial Operating Segment (IOS) alternative will be prepared simultaneously. The EIS/conceptual engineering process will assess the social, economic, and environmental impacted of the proposed alternatives while refining their design to minimize and mitigate any adverse impacts. After its publication, the Draft EIS will be available for public review and comment, and public hearings will be held. On the basis of the Draft EIS and comments received, RTC will select a refined Fixed Guideway Element and a refined fixed guideway IOS project definition. RTC will then select the refined IOS project alternative that will be carried into the Final EIS and will complete the preliminary engineering. Following this action by RTC, RTC will request FTA authorization to proceed with the Final EIS and to complete the preliminary engineering activities.

Issued on: September 2, 1998.

Leslie T. Rogers,

Regional Administrator.

[FR Doc. 98–24025 Filed 9–3–98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[Docket No. MARAD–98–4403]

Information Collection Available for Public Comments and Recommendations

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Maritime Administration's (MARAD's) intentions to request approval for three years of a new information collection entitled Customer Service Surveys.