
PREFACE

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (RT), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is undertaking the preparation of an Alternatives Analysis (AA), a combined Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIS/R) and a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for alternative transit improvements for the Downtown/Natomas/Airport (DNA) Corridor in Sacramento, California. The AA is being prepared based on FTA guidelines, and the DEIS is being prepared in conformance with 40 CFR Part 1500-1508, Council on Environmental Quality Regulation for Implementing the Procedural Requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as amended; 49 CFR Part 611, Federal Transit Administration, Major Capital Investment Projects; and The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). In addition, the DEIR and FEIR will fulfill the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) concerning the assessment of the environmental impacts of major projects.

Study Description

Sacramento's DNA Corridor has been studied extensively over the past twenty years as part of both regional and local planning efforts, including the 1984 Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Study, the 1994 North Natomas and South Natomas Community Plans, the 1998 Amendments to the City of Sacramento General Plan, and the SACOG 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) prepared in 2002. The DNA Corridor was also identified in RT's Multi-Corridor Study (June 2001) as one of RT's high priority corridors for implementing major transit improvements. Beginning in downtown Sacramento, the Corridor proceeds north through South and North Natomas and west to the Sacramento International Airport. Generally, the Sacramento River is considered the Corridor's western boundary, and the ex-Western Pacific (WP) Railroad right-of-way (ROW) is considered the eastern boundary.

This DNA Corridor Study, sponsored by RT, commenced in October 2001. Following the review of FTA guidelines, public comments received during three Scoping sessions, input from the Technical Review Panel (TRP) and Citizens Review Panel (CRP) established by RT, and policy direction provided by the RT Board of Directors, the basic alternatives proposed for consideration include the following:

- Alternative 1: No-Build
- Alternative 2: Baseline/Transportation Systems Management (TSM)
- Alternative 3: Truxel Road Light Rail Transit
- Alternative 3A: Truxel Road Light Rail Transit – Starter Line
- Alternative 3B: Truxel Road Light Rail Transit – Minimum Operable Segment (MOS)
- Alternative 4: Truxel Road Bus Rapid Transit
- Alternative 4A: Truxel Road Bus Rapid Transit Starter Line
- Alternative 4B: Truxel Road Light Rail Transit – Minimum Operable Segment (MOS)
- Alternative 5: I-5/Truxel Road Light Rail Transit
- Alternative 6: I-5/Truxel Road Bus Rapid Transit
- Alternative 7: I-5 Light Rail Transit
- Alternative 8: I-5 Bus Rapid Transit

Study Scope

The DNA Corridor Study is being conducted in two steps. The first step consists of preparing an AA Report, which will describe the results of the alternatives analysis and conclude with the RT Board of Directors adopting a locally preferred alternative (LPA). The second step will consist of preparing the DEIS/R and FEIR, which will evaluate the environmental impacts associated with the LPA and a No-Build Alternative.

The AA Report, the DEIS/R and FEIR will comprehensively examine and comparatively evaluate its set of alternatives using a broad set of criteria, which embrace FTA New Starts guidelines/criteria for a new fixed guideway project. These criteria include: environmental concerns, ridership forecasts, engineering, capital, operating and maintenance costs, economic and cost-effectiveness considerations, traffic impacts, and opportunities for transit-oriented development. How well each alternative does or does not help achieve regional goals and objectives will play a major role in the selection of an LPA. Public input will be provided throughout the course of the study by community groups, the general public, agency staff, and elected officials through an active public participation program.

Purpose of This Document

Preparation of the AA Report, and the subsequent DEIS/R and FEIR, has been subdivided into a number of individual tasks and sub-tasks. As these are carried out, a number of documents, such as this one, will be produced for the purpose of providing early information to FTA and others interested in the study's procedures and findings.

Consequently, the material contained in the deliverables should be considered as work in progress. It is subject to revision as comments are received and responded to by the study team; it may be superseded as a result of subsequent activities. Ultimately, the final documentation for the study will be contained in an AA Report, DEIS/R and FEIR; and later, a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Schedule

The DNA Corridor study, which was initiated in October 2001, includes preparation of an AA Report that will lead to the selection of an LPA in December 2003. The LPA will then be submitted for approval by the Sacramento City Council, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, and by SACOG as an amendment to its financially constrained long-range MTP. The DEIS/R and FEIR will be available for public review in July of next year and is to be completed by September 2004.

Subsequent Steps

After selection of an LPA and completion of the DEIS/R and FEIR, FTA approvals to proceed will be sought, including authorization to begin Preliminary Engineering and completion of the FEIS.

For Further Information

For additional information about the study, visit RT's study website at www.DNArt.org. This publication is available in accessible formats. Please call (916) 321-2877 or (916) 483-HEAR (4327) (TDD for the hearing impaired) to request this document in an alternative format.