

disadvantaged by increased overhead costs. Applicants argue that the requested relief and order will promote competitiveness in the variable annuity market by obviating the filing of redundant exemptive applications, thereby reducing administrative expenses and maximizing efficient use of resources and enhancing the Applicant's ability to effectively take advantage of business opportunities as such arise. Applicants submit, for all the reasons stated herein, that their request for approval is necessary or appropriate in the public interest and consistent with the protection of investors and the purposes fairly intended by the policy and provisions of the 1940 Act, and that an order of the Commission should, therefore, be granted.

Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, Applicants request that the Commission issue an order granting the exemptions and an amended order as described above. Applicants believe that the requested exemptions and the amended order, in accordance with the standards of Section 6(c), are appropriate in the public interest and consistent with the protection of investors and the purposes fairly intended by the policy and provisions of the 1940 Act.

For the Commission, by the Divisions of Investment Management, pursuant to delegated authority.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 99-7685 Filed 3-29-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Secretary

[Public Notice 3017]

National Interest Determination and Waiver of Section 620(q) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as Amended, Relating to Assistance to Honduras

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by Section 620(q) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Executive Order 12163, and the Department of State Delegation of Authority No. 145, I hereby determine that furnishing assistance to Honduras is in the national interest and that the Section's prohibition on assistance is waived. This determination shall be reported to Congress as required by law. The determination shall also be published in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: February 19, 1999.

Strobe Talbott,

Deputy Secretary of State.

[FR Doc. 99-7768 Filed 3-29-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-10-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Notice of Intent To Rule on Application (99-12-C-00-CHO) To Impose a Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) at Charlottesville-Albemarle Airport, Charlottesville, VA

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Correction to notice of intent to rule on application.

SUMMARY: This correction revises information from the previously published notice.

In notice document 99-6937 beginning on Page 13841 in the issue of Monday, March 22, 1999, under Notice of Intent to Rule on Application, the correct number should read "99-12-00-CHO". Under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**, second paragraph the second sentence should read "The FAA will approve or disapprove the application, in whole or in part, no later than April 30, 1999".

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 29, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Art Winder, Project Manager, Washington, Airports District Office, 23723 Air Freight Lane 3911 Hartzdale Dr., Suite 1, Camp Hill, PA 17011. (717) 730-2832.

Issued in Jamaica, New York on March 23, 1999.

Thomas Felix,

Manager, Planning and Programming Branch, AEA-610, Eastern Region.

[FR Doc. 99-7764 Filed 3-29-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement of the Extension of Subway Service From Manhattan to LaGuardia Airport

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an alternatives analysis/environmental impact statement (AA/EIS).

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the

Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) New York City Transit (NYC Transit) intend to prepare an Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement (AA/EIS) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for transportation improvements in the corridor between LaGuardia Airport and Lower and Midtown Manhattan. MTA NYC Transit will ensure that the AA/EIS also satisfies the requirements of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act. The work being performed will also satisfy the FTA's alternatives analysis requirements and guidelines.

This effort will be performed in cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the New York City Departments of Transportation and City Planning and the New York State Department of Transportation. Other interested agencies and elected officials or bodies include the New York State Office of the Governor, the New York City Office of the Mayor, the Office of the Borough President of Queens, the New York City Planning Commission, and the New York City Council.

Its proximity to Manhattan makes LaGuardia Airport ideally suited to the Manhattan-bound business traveler. However, travelers to LaGuardia must use frequently congested highways (Grand Central Parkway, Brooklyn-Queens Expressway, Long Island Expressway) and river crossings (e.g. Midtown Tunnel, Tri-borough Bridge). Peak period travel times between Manhattan and LaGuardia are frequently an hour or more, and uncertainty regarding travel times forces travelers to set aside even more time to avoid missing flights or appointments in Manhattan. Unless corrective actions are taken, these access limitations will reduce both the airport's appeal to travelers and the attractiveness of the city as a national and international center.

Many other major cities in this country and abroad have direct rail rapid transit access to their airports. In contrast, transit service to LaGuardia is infrequent or inconvenient, with relatively high fares and lengthy and unreliable travel times in peak periods (since the available transit modes depend on the same congested highways and local streets). However, many LaGuardia passengers have origins or destinations within the Manhattan Central Business District (CBD), which has an extensive existing rail rapid transit network with extensions into Queens. This

combination forms an established base from which an attractive transit link to the airport could potentially be built.

Given these problems, the AA/EIS will evaluate public transit improvements in the corridor between Lower and Midtown Manhattan and LaGuardia Airport in Queens, New York. In particular, the focus will be on proposed extensions of existing rail rapid transit (subway) lines that presently operate in Manhattan and Queens, and which would be extended along a selected alignment to provide service to the airport.

Scoping of the AA/DEIS will be accomplished through correspondence with interested persons, organizations, and federal, state and local agencies, and through public meetings. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below for details.

During the initial months of the AA/DEIS process, MTA NYC Transit will work with other agencies and with the general public to identify potentially feasible alternatives for providing prompt, reliable, dedicated access between Lower and Midtown Manhattan and LaGuardia Airport. These alternatives should take full advantage of the city's existing extensive public transit network, and provide travelers with a "single-seat ride" from points throughout the Manhattan CBD to the airport. Only those alternatives found to meet the project's needs, goals and objectives would receive detailed consideration in the AA/DEIS. In addition to possible new transit lines or services, the AA/DEIS will also evaluate a No-Build alternative and a Transportation System Management (TSM) alternative. See the Alternatives discussion under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below for details.

DATES: Comment Due Date: Written comments on the scope of alternatives and impacts to be considered should be sent to the MTA-NCY Transit offices by May 28, 1999. See **ADDRESSES** below.

Scoping Meetings: The public scoping meetings will be held on Tuesday, May 11, 1999 starting at 6PM (sign-in begins at 5PM) at the Steinway School (IS141) at 37-11 21st Avenue in Astoria, New York, and on Wednesday, May 12, 1999 starting at 6PM (sign-in begins at 5PM) at the Metropolitan Transportation Authority offices in Manhattan. See **ADDRESSES** below. People with special needs should contact Douglas Sussman at the Metropolitan Transportation Authority offices at the address below or by calling (212)-878-7483. Both meeting locations are accessible to people with disabilities. The Queens

location can be accessed by subway (Astoria "N" line at the Ditmars Boulevard Station), and by the Q19A and Q101 bus lines, which also connect to the E and F subway lines at the Queens Plaza station, and to the #7 subway line at the Queensboro Plaza station. Limited public parking is available near the site. The Manhattan location is within several blocks of the #4, 5, 6 and 7 subway lines (at the Grand Central station) and the B, D and F lines at 42nd Street at 6th Avenue, and to numerous local bus routes on Sixth, Fifth and Madison Avenues and along 42nd Street.

The meetings will be held in an "open house" format, and project representatives will be available to discuss the project throughout the time period given. Informational displays and written materials will also be available. In addition to written comment, which may be made at the meeting or as described below, a stenographer will be available at the meetings to record comments.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the project scope should be sent to Mr. Thomas R. Jablonski, Project Manager, MTA-NCY Transit, 130 Livingston Street, Room 7068-D, Brooklyn, New York 11201. The scoping meetings will be held at the following locations: Steinway School (IS 141), 37-11 21st Avenue, Astoria, New York 11370, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, 5th Floor Board Room, 347 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017. **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Brian P. Sterman, Federal Transit Administration, One Bowling Green, Room 429, New York, New York 10004-1415. (212)-668-2201.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Scoping

FTA and MTA-NCY Transit invite interested individuals, organizations and federal, state and local agencies to participate in defining the alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS and identifying any significant social, economic or environmental issues related to the alternatives. Scoping comments may be made at the public scoping meeting or in writing. See **DATES** and **ADDRESSES** section above for locations and times. During scoping, comments should focus on identifying specific social, economic or environmental impacts to evaluate, and suggesting alternatives that are more cost effective or have less environmental impact while achieving the similar transportation goals and objectives.

Scoping materials will be available at the meetings or in advance of those

meetings by contacting Mr. Thomas Jablonski at MTA-NCY Transit as indicated above.

II. Description of Study Area and Project Need

The study area and travel corridors involved are wholly within New York and Queens Counties. They primarily include Lower and Midtown Manhattan (the Central Business District (CBD) of Manhattan) and those portion of northern and northwestern Queens through which passengers and employees pass on their way to and from LaGuardia Airport. The Manhattan CBD is one of the largest and most dense employment concentrations in the world, but also includes a major residential population. The involved areas of Queens include numerous commercial and industrial centers as well as major residential areas.

Existing transit service between the Manhattan CBD and LaGuardia Airport includes: (a) Gray Line bus service from various CBD locations; (b) ferry service from Lower Manhattan to LaGuardia's Marine Air Terminal (MAT); and (c) local bus lines connecting existing subway lines to the airport (e.g., the Q33 and Q47 bus routes connecting with the "E," "F" and "R" subway lines at the Roosevelt Avenue station, the Q48 bus route from the "7" subway service at Main Street-Flushing, and the M60 bus route from the "N" subway service at the Astoria Boulevard station). The available paratransit services in this travel market include medallion taxis, private car and limousine services, and private vans and mini-buses operated by hotels and other Manhattan operations.

As noted above in the Summary section, all transit and paratransit modes serving the airport (except the ferry service to the MAT) must use combinations of local streets, arterials, highways and bridges and tunnels, many of which are highly congested during the travel periods when airport demand is the greatest. In addition to traffic congestion and the associated air and noise pollution, travel by these existing highway-dependent modes is often unreliable—a fundamental problem for time-sensitive air travelers.

Given the need to address these airport access problems, the primary goals for the LaGuardia Airport Subway Access (LASA) project are to (a) provide convenient, reliable and safe public transit access for airport passengers and employees between Lower and Midtown Manhattan and LaGuardia Airport, (b) develop public transit options providing a "one-seat" (i.e., transfer-free) trip between Lower and Midtown Manhattan and multiple LaGuardia

Airport terminals, (c) improve the quality of public transit service and reduce the travel time within the study corridor from LaGuardia Airport to the Manhattan CBD, (d) reduce the use of congested highway, river crossings, local streets and arterials by LaGuardia Airport passengers and employees, thereby reducing areawide traffic congestion, (e) increase mobility by better serving the critical Manhattan CBD-to-LaGuardia Airport travel market, and by creating improved connections within the region to the Manhattan CBD, (f) attract new ridership to public transit through the initiation of additional service to LaGuardia Airport, (g) minimize impacts to airport operations during and after construction, and ensure that proposed alignments do not preclude other planned improvements on- or off-airport, (h) promote and reinforce economic development and the quality of life in New York, (i) more efficiently accommodate forecasted growth in LaGuardia Airport passenger trips, (j) conform to the New York State Air Quality Implementation Plan (SIP) as required by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, (k) avoid, minimize and mitigate degradation of the natural environment, and (l) provide reliable transit service that is compatible with existing transit systems in the region.

Adherence to these goals should help identify new services that take full advantage of the city's extensive transit network in the Manhattan CBD and Queens, maximize the potential for a "single-seat" ride from Lower and Midtown Manhattan to LaGuardia, preserve the city's quality of life while supporting economic development, and minimize the degradation of the natural environment.

The objectives to be used to facilitate the process of selecting a locally preferred alternative are to (a) identify viable alternatives that address the corridor's transportation problems while meeting the project's goals; (b) develop criteria for screening and evaluating the alternatives based upon the project's goals; (c) identify the anticipated impacts for each alternative with potential mitigation strategies; (d) initiate the development of cost/benefit projections that are used for project considerations; and (e) identify the locally preferred alternative for study in the FEIS.

III. Alternatives

The AA/DEIS process will include a review of proposed alternatives that could potentially meet the project's goals and objectives, and the selection of those alternatives that warrant

detailed study in the AA/DEIS. This process will insure that all reasonable and feasible alternatives are considered. It is projected that the AA/DEIS will consider the following alternatives, at a minimum:

(1) *No Build Alternative*, representing future conditions in the travel corridors between the Manhattan CBD and LaGuardia Airport with no new transportation projects or services, other than those already committed to by local officials and agencies.

(2) *Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative*, representing future conditions with the implementation of one or more lower-cost measures to improve the efficiency of existing transportation systems, rather than significantly expanding those systems (e.g., improvements to the existing express bus services, subway-to-bus connections to the airport, etc.).

(3) *Build Alternatives*, involving construction of facilities and implementation of associated transit services between the Manhattan CBD and LaGuardia Airport. In recent decades, the MTA, PANYNJ and other public agencies have performed extensive studies of possible transit connections to this airport. Based on those studies and on further studies by MTA NYC Transit of possible extensions of the BMT Broadway Astoria Line ("N" Train service), the following two subway alternatives are scheduled to be considered in the AA/DEIS. These are preliminary alignments for these alternatives, with further refinements expected throughout the AA/DEIS process in both the off- and on-airport sections:

- The 19th Avenue Alternative would be an extension of the BMT Broadway-Astoria Line ("N" Train service) beyond its present Ditmars Boulevard Terminus. From that point, the line would be extended northerly as a modern aerial transit guideway structure along the centerline of 31st Street up to 20th Avenue. From there, the alignment would curve easterly across the Con Edison property to 19th Avenue, where it would continue along the avenue. At 45th Street, the alignment would swing northerly and then enter a tunnel section, in which the alignment would remain as it crosses onto the airport property. After serving the Marine Air Terminal and passing around the runway at the airport's western end, the alignment would rise onto an aerial section, and extend to two other on-airport stations—one at the Central Terminal Building (CTB) and a second to jointly serve the USAir and Delta terminals.

- Sunnyside Yard Alternative would be a branch of the BMT Broadway-Astoria Line ("N" Train service) starting at the Queensboro Plaza Station in Long Island City. From that point, the alignment would extend as a modern aerial transit guideway structure along the northern side of the Sunnyside Yards, and would then pass over and run along the eastern side of AMTRAK's Northeast Corridor tracks. At approximately 30th Avenue, the alignment would turn east and run along the northern side of 30th Avenue before turning north along the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway (BQE). At that point, the alignment will enter a "depressed section" (where the tracks are below grade but in an "open cut" section rather than enclosed in a tunnel) as it travels along the southern side of the Grand Central Parkway (GCP). As it approaches the airport, the alignment would rise and cross over the GCP to enter the airport. On-airport stations are projected to be provided at the CTB and USAir/Delta terminals as noted above for the 19th Avenue Alternative.

(4) *Other Alternatives*. The FTA and MTA NYC Transit will review other possible Build alternatives that may be raised throughout the scoping process. Any other alternatives found to potentially meet the project's goals and objectives, as outlined above, would also be analyzed in the AA/DEIS.

IV. Probable Effects

The FTA and MTA NYC Transit plan to evaluate in the AA/DEIS all potentially significant social, economic and environmental impacts of the project alternatives. Impacts proposed for analysis include changes in the physical environment (air quality, noise, water quality, geology, visual); changes in the social environment (land use, residential, commercial or industrial displacement or disruption, changes in neighborhood character or cohesion); changes in traffic and pedestrian circulation (on local streets, highways and arterials, and at the airport) and associated changes in traffic congestion; impacts to parklands or historic sites; changes in transit service, mobility and patronage; capital, operating and maintenance costs for proposed transit services; and financial and fiscal implication. Impacts will be analyzed for both construction-period activities, and for long-term operation of the alternatives.

Construction-period impacts projected to be of importance for this project include noise and vibration, traffic diversions due to temporary roadway closures, temporary loss of on-street parking, and short-term

disruptions to subway service. Potential long-term impact of likely importance include traffic, parking and pedestrian flow impacts near stations (including on-airport locations), visual impacts due to the introduction or extension of transit lines into an area, noise impacts, and property acquisitions and residential or commercial displacement to provide space for alternatives' right-of-way or support facilities.

Each alternative will be analyzed for potential transportation, environmental, social, economic and financial impacts as required by current Federal (NEPA) and State (SEQRA) environmental laws and current Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and FTA guidelines and will be evaluated for its ability to meet the project's goals.

V. FTA Procedures

In accordance with federal transportation planning regulations 23 CFR part 450, the AA/DEIS will include a comprehensive alternatives selection process, which will assess each possible alternative's ability to meet the project's goals and objectives, and determine those alternatives that warrant detailed analysis. Upon completion of the AA/DEIS, the MTA NYC Transit, in concert with other agencies and elected officials and bodies, will select a locally preferred alternative.

Then the MTA NYC Transit, as the project sponsor, will seek to continue the further engineering and preparation of the Final EIS. After consideration of the results of the FEIS, the FTA and MTA NYC Transit and the FAA will prepare required environmental decisions and Records of Decision (RODs). The publication of these RODs will clear the way for the final design and construction of the finally selected alternative.

Issued on March 25, 1999.

Letitia Thompson,

Regional Administrator, Federal Transit Administration.

[FR Doc. 99-7779 Filed 3-29-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-57-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

Sunshine Act Meeting; Corrected Notice¹

TIME AND DATE: 10:00 a.m. Thursday, March 25, 1999.

EX PARTE NO. 333: Meetings of the Board.

¹ This corrects the notice serviced March 19, 1999, to include Finance Docket No. 33556 Sub Nos. 2 and 3.

PLACE: Hearing Room, Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20423.

STATUS: The Board will meet to discuss among themselves the agenda item listed below. Although the conference is open for public observation, no public participation is permitted.

MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED: Finance Docket No. 33556, Canadian National Railway Company, Grand Trunk Corporation, and Grand Trunk Western Railroad Incorporated—control—Illinois Central Corporation, Illinois Central Railroad Company, Chicago, Central and Pacific Railroad Company, and Cedar River Railroad; Finance Docket No. 33556 (Sub-No. 1), Canadian National Railway Company, Illinois Central Railroad Company, The Kansas City Southern Railway Company, and Gateway Western Railway Company—Terminal Trackage Rights—Union Pacific Railroad Company and Norfolk & Western Railway Company; STB Finance Docket No. 33556 (Sub-No. 2), Responsive Application—Ontario Michigan Rail Corporation; and, Finance Docket No. 33556 (Sub-No. 3), Responsive Application—Canadian Pacific Railway Company and St. Lawrence & Hudson Railway Company Limited.

CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION: Dennis Watson, Office of Congressional and Public Services, Telephone: (202) 565-1594, TDD: (202) 565-1695.

Dated: March 22, 1999.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 99-7759 Filed 3-26-99; 11:58 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33723]

San Joaquin Valley Railroad Company—Acquisition and Operation Exemption—Tulare Valley Railroad Company

San Joaquin Valley Railroad Company (SJVR), a Class III rail carrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.41 to acquire from Tulare Valley Railroad Company (TVR) seven railroad line segments. The lines to be acquired and operated by SJVR are as follows: (1) on the Arvin Subdivision, TVR's undivided one-half interest in the line between milepost 316.78, at Magunden, and milepost 333.83, at Arvin, a distance of 17.05 miles in Kern County, CA; (2) on the Oil City Subdivision, TVR's undivided one-half

interest in the line between milepost 308.09, at Oil Junction, and milepost 312.55, at Maltha, a distance of 4.46 miles in Kern County, CA; (3) on the Porterville Subdivision, the line between milepost 38.9, at Exeter, and milepost 47.2, at Lindsay, a distance of 8.3 miles in Tulare County, CA; (4) on the Visalia Subdivision, the line between milepost 23.8, at Visalia, and milepost 20.2, at Loma, a distance of 3.6 miles in Tulare County, CA; (5) on the Visalia Subdivision, the line between milepost 51.0, at Lacjac, and milepost 49.8, at Reedley, a distance of 1.2 miles in Tulare County, CA; (6) on the Cameo Rail Spur, the line between milepost 0.03+160, at Fresno, and milepost 6.0, near Fresno, a distance of about 5.97 miles in Fresno County, CA; and (7) on the Landco Spur, the line between milepost 113.70, near Bakersfield, and milepost 111.76, near Bakersfield, a distance of 1.94 miles in Kern County, CA.

Because the projected revenues of the rail lines to be operated will exceed \$5 million, SJVR certified to the Board, on March 9, 1999, that the required notice of its acquisition had been posted at the workplace of the employees on the affected lines. On March 10, 1999, SJVR certified to the Board that it had served a copy of the notice on the national offices of the labor unions with employees on the affected lines. See 49 CFR 1150.42(e). The transaction is scheduled to be consummated on or after May 10, 1999.

If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke does not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33723, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Fritz R. Kahn, Esq., 1100 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 750 West, Washington, DC 20005-3934.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at "WWW.STB.DOT.GOV."

Decided: March 23, 1999.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 99-7557 Filed 3-29-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P