



U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION

Pennsylvania Division

228 Walnut Street, Room 508
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1720

Federal Highway
Administration

FEB 19 2009

In reply refer to:
HEV-PA.2

Danielle Gosselin
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423

Attention: Environmental Filing
STB Finance Document No. 35116

Dear Ms. Gosselin:

Please consider this the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Pennsylvania Division's formal request to become a Cooperating Agency for the proposed project referenced under STB Finance Docket No. 35116. This request is being made based on the 'reasonable and feasible alternatives' listed in the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, which include:

- (2) no-build alternative option 1 involving the construction of a new interchange on Interstate 80 (I-80) and
- (3) no-build alternative option 2 involving improving the existing local road system (i.e., road paving, bridge replacement, etc).

Both of these alternatives, and in particular the I-80 interchange (no-build option 1) alternative, would result in an action by FHWA should either be selected. Therefore, FHWA believes that it is in the interest of all parties that we are involved throughout the environmental and alternative-selection process.

FHWA involvement to date:

The proposed project being evaluated would "provide rail service to a proposed new quarry, landfill, and industrial park being developed by Resource Recovery, LLC near Gorton in Rush Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania." During early evaluation of access to the proposed landfill, a new, privately-funded interchange on Interstate 80 was proposed by Resource Recovery and a Point of

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Access (POA) Study was prepared and presented to FHWA for conceptual approval. Conceptual approval was not granted (in a later dated January 25, 2007) due to the following issues:

1. The POA document failed to demonstrate that the "existing interchanges and/or local roads and streets in the corridor can neither provide the necessary access nor be improved to satisfactorily accommodate the design-year traffic demands while at the same time providing the access intended by the proposal."
2. The proposal has not demonstrated consistency with regional land use and transportation plans.

FHWA has not received a subsequent request for conceptual approval and understands that Centre County has denied the proposed project's inclusion in their Comprehensive Plan. Only recently have we received notice of the proposed reactivation and construction of rail line to provide access in lieu of the construction of a new I-80 interchange and that the no-build alternatives mentioned above will be included in the Environmental Impact Statement.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at (717) 221-3735 or Jonathan.Crum@dot.gov.

Sincerely,



Jonathan P. Crum
Environmental Protection Specialist

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