

Issued on: December 5, 1996.

Jeffrey Lindley,

Deputy Director, ITS Joint Program Office.

[FR Doc. 96-31341 Filed 12-9-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

Federal Railroad Administration

Notification of Funds Availability for Next Generation High-Speed Rail Corridor Studies

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration; Department of Transportation.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 1997 (Public Law 104-205 (September 30, 1996)), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has \$900,000 in next generation high speed rail funds available for grants to eligible participants for high speed rail corridor planning assistance, including preliminary engineering and operational analysis, and other planning activities. This notice sets forth the criteria by which FRA will make its selection of grant recipients. The FRA strongly supports the advancement of high-speed rail in congested corridors where it can be an important component of a balanced transportation system. Further, FRA believes the development or continuation of high-speed rail in specific corridors should be undertaken as a partnership of states, localities, and the private sector, with support from the Federal government. Pursuant to the Swift Rail Development Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-440 (November 2, 1994)), the Secretary may provide financial assistance to a public agency or group of public agencies for corridor planning for up to 50 percent of the publicly financed costs associated with eligible activities. Not less than 20 percent of the publicly financed costs associated with eligible activities shall come from State and local sources, which State and local sources may not include funds from any Federal programs. (In determining Federal, state and local shares under this provision, private financial assistance is to be first deducted. Then a Federal ceiling of 50 percent and a state and local floor of 20 percent is applied. The state and local funds must exclude funds made available from any Federal program. The remaining 30 percent of the non-privately financed portion of the project may be paid for using funds made available to the applicant from other Federal programs).

Criteria for Funding

Eligible participants are encouraged to submit a request for funding which addresses the following criteria:

1. The level of interest in the chosen corridor demonstrated by State, regional, and local governments and elected officials or other interested groups. Interest can be shown by the past and proposed financial commitments and in-kind resources of State and local governments and the private sector.
2. The extent to which the proposed planning focuses on systems which will achieve sustained speeds of 125 mph or greater.
3. The degree of integration of the corridor into metropolitan area and statewide transportation planning.
4. The potential interconnection of the corridor with other parts of the Nation's transportation system, including the interconnection with other countries.
5. The anticipated effect of the corridor on the congestion of other modes of transportation.
6. Whether the work to be funded will aid the efforts of state and local governments to enhance compliance with Federal environmental laws and regulations.
7. The estimated level of ridership and the estimated capital cost of corridor improvements, including the cost of closing, improving, or separating highway-rail grade crossings.
8. Whether a specific route has been selected, specific improvements identified, and capacity studies completed, and whether the corridor has been designated as a high-speed rail corridor under Section 1010 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, Public Law 102-240 (December 18, 1991).

Eligible Participants: Any state government, local government, organization of state and/or local government, or any combination of such entities is eligible to apply for funding.

DOT Electronic Grants Pilot Project

All applicants are eligible and encouraged to participate in the "DOT Electronic Grants Pilot Project." Through this pilot project, grant applicants will be provided with access to specially designed Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) data screens on DOT's World Wide Web (WWW) homepage. The screens and related system components will enable customers to submit grant applications electronically including the Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424. Applicants will also be provided the

capability to submit proposals as text document attachments to the electronic application.

Future enhancements will provide for electronic submission of grant reports and payment requests.

To participate or for more information, please contact Brad Smith, Federal Railroad Administration, via e-mail at: bradley.smith@fra.dot.gov or tel.: (202) 632-3276.

Deadline For Requests for Grant Applications: Eligible participants desiring to apply for this funding should notify FRA by letter, and FRA will respond initially by providing a standard grant application package. For priority consideration, FRA requests that the completed grant application packages be returned to the below address by March 3, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Applications should be submitted to: Honorable Jolene M. Molitoris, Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration, ATTN: RDV-11, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: John F. Cikota at (202) 632-3264.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on December 2, 1996.

Jolene M. Molitoris,

Federal Railroad Administrator.

[FR Doc. 96-31351 Filed 12-9-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-06-M

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33294]

Grand Trunk Western Railroad Incorporated—Trackage Rights Exemption—Consolidated Rail Corporation

Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) has agreed to grant limited overhead trackage rights to Grand Trunk Western Railroad Incorporated (GTW) between the Conrail/GTW connection on Conrail's North Yard Branch at CP-Vinewood (MP 3.1+), Detroit, MI, and the connection with GTW's existing rights over Conrail (pursuant to an agreement between the parties dated September 27, 1984), at the connection between Conrail and the Ann Arbor Railroad on Conrail's Detroit Line, at Alexis, OH (MP 50.3+).

The transaction was scheduled to be consummated on or after the November 28, 1996 effective date of the exemption.

The purpose of the trackage rights is to attract to rail service certain automotive parts traffic moving between Detroit and Toledo by improving service and transit time.

As a condition to this exemption, any employees affected by the trackage rights will be protected by the conditions imposed in *Norfolk and Western Ry. Co.—Trackage Rights—BN*, 354 I.C.C. 605 (1978), as modified in *Mendocino Coast Ry., Inc.—Lease and Operate*, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980).

This notice is filed under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(7). If it 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 will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 33294, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Robert P. vom Eigen, Esq., Hopkins & Sutter, 888 16th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20006.

Decided: December 2, 1996.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik,
Director, Office of Proceedings.
Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-31330 Filed 12-9-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

[STB Finance Docket No. 32984]

Hastings Industrial Link Railroad— Construction and Operation Exemption—Hastings, NE

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice of exemption.

SUMMARY: Under 49 U.S.C. 10502, the Board conditionally exempts from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 10901 the construction and operation by Hastings Industrial Link Railroad of a 1-mile line of railroad, in Adams County, NE.

DATES: The exemption will not become effective until the environmental process is completed. Then, the Board will issue a further decision addressing the environmental matters and establishing an exemption effective date at that time, if appropriate. Petitions to reopen must be filed by December 30, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Send pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 32984, to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423; and (2) Andrew P. Goldstein, Suite 1105, 1750

Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.,
Washington, DC 20006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Beryl Gordon, (202) 927-5660. [TDD for the hearing impaired: (202) 927-5721.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Additional information is contained in the Board's decision. To purchase a copy of the full decision, write to, call, or pick up in person from: DC Data & News, Inc., Room 2229, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423. Telephone: (202) 289-4357/4359. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through TDD services (202) 927-5721.]

Decided: December 2, 1996.

By the Board, Chairman Morgan, Vice
Chairman Simmons, Commissioner Owen.
Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-31331 Filed 12-09-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

AGENCY: United States Information Agency.

ACTION: Submission for OMB review; comment request.

SUMMARY: Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), this notice announces that the following information collection activity has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. USIA is requesting approval for revisions and a three-year extension of an information collection entitled "Certificate of eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status (J-1 Visa)", under OMB control number 3116-0008 which expires January 31, 1996. This request for comment is being made pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 [Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3506(c) (2) (A)].

The information collection activity involved with the program is conducted pursuant to the mandate given to the United States Information Agency under the terms and conditions of the Mutual and Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Title 22 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 514, Exchange Visitor Program, Final Rule; and Title 8, Section 101(a)(15) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

DATE: Comments are due on or before January 9, 1997.

COPIES: Copies of the Request for Clearance (OMB 83-I), supporting statement, and other documents that have been submitted to OMB for approval may be obtained from the USIA Clearance Officer. Comments should be submitted to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for USIA, and also to the USIA Clearance Officer.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Agency Clearance Officer, Ms. Jeannette Giovetti, United States Information Agency, M/ADD, 301 Fourth Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, telephone (202) 619-4408, internet address JGiovetti@USIA.GOV; and OMB review: Ms. Victoria Wassmer, Office of Information And Regulatory Affairs, Office of management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Docket Library, Room 1002, NEOB, Washington, D.C. 20503, Telephone (202) 395-5871.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An Agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The Federal Register Notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on October 10, 1996 (vol. 61, no. 198). Public reporting burden for this collection of information (Paper Work Reduction Project: OMB No. 3116-0008) is estimated to average 15 minutes per response. Respondents are required to respond only one time, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden, to the United States Information Agency, M/ADD, 301 Fourth Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547; and to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Docket Library, Room 10202, NEOB, Washington, D.C. 20503.

Current Actions: This information collection has been submitted to OMB for the purpose of requesting a three-year extension and approval of revisions to the form.

Title: "Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status (J-1 Visa)".

Form Number: IAP-66.

Abstract: This information collection is used by Exchange Visitor sponsors to appropriately identify an individual