

southern portion of the project is within a high-growth urban commercial setting with regional big box retail uses and a large retail mall on the west side of the highway. Smaller regional and local retail and manufacturing businesses are on the east side of the highway.

The EIS will identify transportation needs and deficiencies in the project study area, including safety, mobility, access, safety, system linkages and continuity. The range of alternatives evaluated in the EIS will be developed to meet the identified purpose and need. Potential alternatives and combinations thereof may include, but are not limited to: (1) No action; (2) reroute U.S. 97 on a westerly alignment; and (3) reroute U.S. 973 on an easterly alignment. Design variations of potential alternatives will also be studied, as appropriate. A refinement plan for U.S. 97 & U.S. 20 was completed in May 2007. Information from the refinement plan may be utilized as appropriate in the development of this EIS.

The EIS will be initiated with a scoping process. The scoping process will include a program of public outreach and agency coordination conducted over the next several months to elicit input of project purpose and need, potential alternatives, significant and insignificant issues, and collaborative methods of analyzing transportation alternatives and environmental impacts.

A series of public, agency and tribal meetings will be held in early 2008 and continue throughout the development of the EIS. The public outreach program will include multiple public meetings conducted by ODOT as well as coordination with the Technical Management Team, the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Project Steering Team. The Technical Management Team is comprised of technical representatives from ODOT, the City of Bend, Deschutes County and the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. The Citizens Advisory Committee is comprised of the public representing neighborhood and business interests in the project areas. The Project Steering Team is comprised of policy representatives from ODOT, the City of Bend and Deschutes County.

A public hearing will be held in connection with the release of the draft EIS. Public notice will be given regarding the time and place of the public meetings and hearings. An internet website has been established at: <http://www.US97solutions.org> and will be operational beginning January 10, 2008. This website and other communication media will be utilized

throughout the process to provide public information and to receive comments. All comments and input received during the EIS process will be considered and documented.

The FHWA and ODOT will evaluate significant transportation, environmental, social and economic impacts of the project alternatives. Potential areas of impact include: neighborhoods, businesses, natural resources and environmental justice. Measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate any significant adverse impacts will be developed.

Comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties, to ensure that the full range of issues related to this project are addressed and all significant issues are identified. Comments or questions regarding the proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

Authority: 23 U.S.C. 315.

Issued on: December 18, 2007.

Michelle Eraut,

Environmental Program Manager, Salem, Oregon.

[FR Doc. E7-25023 Filed 12-26-07; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council

ACTION: National Advisory Council public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Maritime Administration announces that the Marine Transportation System National Advisory Council (MTSNAC) will hold a meeting to discuss an expanded Marine Transportation System outreach and education program that addresses future workforce needs, environmental issues, and freight mobility; public and private sector data collection efforts; and addressing MTSNAC's ten public/private recommendations. A public comment period is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Thursday, January 10, 2008. To provide time for as many people to speak as possible, speaking time for each individual will be limited to three minutes. Members of the public who would like to speak are asked to contact Richard J. Lolich by January 2, 2008. Commenters will be placed on the agenda in the order in which notifications are received. If time allows, additional comments will be permitted. Copies of oral comments must be submitted in writing at the meeting. Additional written comments

are welcome and must be filed by January 18, 2008.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 9, 2008, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Thursday, January 10, 2008, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in the Westin Seattle Hotel, 1900 Fifth Ave., Seattle, WA 98101. The hotel's phone number is 206-728-1000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Richard Lolich, (202) 366-0704; Maritime Administration, MAR-540, Room W21-309, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE., Washington, DC 20590-0001; richard.lolich@dot.gov.

Authority: 5 U.S.C. App 2, Sec. 9(a)(2); 41 CFR 101-6. 1005; DOT Order 1120.3B.

Dated: December 17, 2007.

By order of the Maritime Administrator.

Christine Gurland,

Acting Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. E7-25009 Filed 12-26-07; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-81-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Ex Parte No. 290 (Sub No. 5) (2008-1)]

Quarterly Rail Cost Adjustment Factor

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Approval of rail cost adjustment factor.

SUMMARY: The Board has approved the rebased first quarter 2008 rail cost adjustment factor (RCAF) and cost index filed by the Association of American Railroads. As required by statute, the RCAF is rebased using the fourth quarter 2007 index value as the denominator and first quarter 2008 index value as the numerator ($10/1/07 = 1.00$). Rebasing is required every five years. The rebased first quarter 2008 RCAF (Unadjusted) is 1.050. The rebased first quarter 2008 RCAF (Adjusted) is 0.486. The rebased first quarter 2008 RCAF-5 is 0.461.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Pedro Ramirez, (202) 245-0333. [Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) for the hearing impaired: 1-800-877-8339.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Additional information is contained in the Board's decision, which is available on our Web site <http://www.stb.dot.gov>. To purchase a copy of the full decision, write to, e-mail, or call the Board's contractor, ASAP Document Solutions, 9332 Annapolis Rd., Suite 103, Lanham, MD 20706; e-mail asapdc@verizon.net;