



Public Involvement Plan

WBS #: 3.01

Glassboro-Camden Line EIS

April 16, 2010

Prepared by:

STV Incorporated 

In association with:

Envision Consultants, Ltd.

Prepared for:



Revision 00

Table of Contents

- 1 Introduction 1
 - 1.1 Background 1
 - 1.2 Purpose of This Public Involvement Plan 1
 - 1.3 Public Involvement Goals and Strategies..... 1
 - 1.4 Schedule 2
- 2 Public Involvement Methods and Activities..... 3
 - 2.1 Support Tools 3
 - 2.2 Meetings 4
 - 2.2.1 Public Scoping Meetings 4
 - 2.2.2 Targeted Outreach Meetings 4
 - 2.2.3 Public Information Session Meetings..... 5
 - 2.2.4 Public Hearings on Draft and Final EIS 5
 - 2.3 Project Website..... 5
 - 2.4 Project Print Materials 6
 - 2.5 Media Relations 6
 - 2.6 Project Contact Information 6
 - 2.7 Record of Public Involvement Activities 6

Figures

- Figure 1-1: EIS Process/Key Public Involvement Milestones 3

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) Light Rail Project is a proposed expansion of transit service in Southern New Jersey between Glassboro and Camden. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in coordination with the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) and Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO), has initiated the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Draft EIS is being prepared with FTA serving as lead federal agency and DRPA/PATCO as joint lead agency.

The GCL corridor generally follows the existing Conrail railroad right-of-way between Glassboro and Camden, traversing the communities of Glassboro, Pitman, Sewell, Mantua Township, Deptford Township, Wenonah, Woodbury Heights, Woodbury, Westville, Brooklawn, Gloucester City and Camden. After DRPA's completion of the "Southern New Jersey to Philadelphia Mass Transit Expansion Alternatives Analysis" in 2009, Light Rail was selected as the Recommended Alternative along this corridor, and advanced as the Light Rail Alternative in the Draft EIS phase.

The AA study included an in-depth public participation process comprised of numerous public open house meetings, key stakeholder meetings, elected officials' briefings and community meetings to identify a consensus-based recommended alternative. The AA study also included the development and dissemination of informational materials, a project website, a project information hotline and media relations. This EIS phase public involvement efforts will build upon, advance and cultivate the public outreach efforts of the previous AA study.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the proposed Glassboro-Camden Line serves as the guideline for coordinating public activities, distributing public information and engaging the public and interested parties throughout the EIS process. This plan outlines and identifies public outreach strategies, public comment opportunities, and methods for disseminating project information.. This plan has been prepared to comply with Section 6002 of the Federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU). Throughout the EIS process, the PIP will be evaluated for effectiveness and areas of improvement; if necessary, the PIP will be revised accordingly.

1.3 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GOALS AND STRATEGIES

The primary goal of public involvement is to provide information to, and obtain input from, a broad range of stakeholders within the GCL corridor. The methods outlined in this PIP aim to achieve the following goals and strategies:

- Educate the public about the environmental review process and the role of government, stakeholders and the general public

- Communicate effectively with the diverse communities, agencies and stakeholders of the region
- Provide accurate, timely and comprehensive documentation on the public involvement process
- Create public forums and collateral materials that provide a clear, concise and easy to understand information, enabling the public to make informed decisions about the project
- Create, maintain and update an interactive project website
- Identify and address local issues and concerns early in the project
- Identify a list of public and regional benefits that the project will generate
- Build a strong database of individuals representing the public, agencies and stakeholders interested and/or involved in the GCL
- Identify stakeholders and determine their needs and concerns, while providing timely project information.
- Respond to public, agency and stakeholder comments on the GCL in an accurate, consistent and timely manner
- Collect and incorporate comments and feedback from the public, agencies and stakeholders
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach strategies for areas of improvement to refine the PIP, as necessary, and utilize the most effective techniques throughout the EIS.

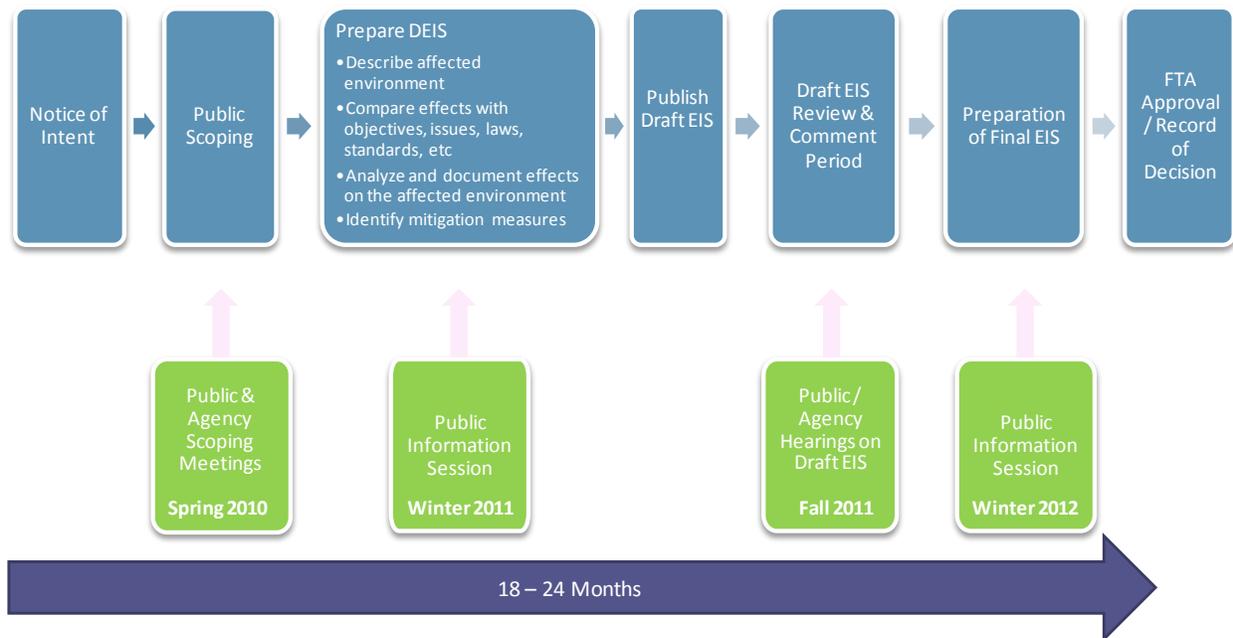
1.4 SCHEDULE

Several key milestones for the GCL study will occur during the environmental process required by federal and state law. These key steps, as well as a preliminary timeframe for each, are listed below:

- Prepare Notice-of-Intent (NOI) and publish in the Federal Register – Spring 2010
- Host Public Scoping Meetings for public comments and input on the Draft Scoping Document – Spring 2010
- Host a Public Information Session on Draft EIS preparation progress – Winter 2010/2011
- Publish Draft EIS for Public/Agency review and comment – Fall 2011
- Publish Final EIS – Winter 2012
- Host a Public Information Session on the Final EIS – Winter 2012
- Request Record of Decision (ROD) – Spring 2012

The EIS process, with major public involvement activities, is shown on Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1: EIS Process/Key Public Involvement Milestones



2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

Public involvement is an essential element of the GCL study. This section describes a variety of support tools, public involvement meetings, and media sources that are centered on providing opportunities for public involvement.

2.1 SUPPORT TOOLS

The support tools are some of the techniques planned for the EIS to encourage successful public involvement. Public involvement progress will be assessed periodically to determine if these methods of communication and support tools are effective, or if adjustments are needed.

1. **GCL Study Team Communication Processes** – The study team will establish processes early in the study to facilitate timely information sharing with the public and agencies.
2. **Stakeholder Identification** – The study team will maintain, update and expand the stakeholder database that was established during the previous AA study.
3. **Project Branding** – The study team has created a project logo and project branding that will be used on project-related materials to enable the public to easily identify the project website, as well as project-related publications, announcements, newsletters and other relevant materials.
4. **Mailing Lists** (Electronic & U.S. Mail) – The study team will build upon the mailing list developed during the AA, and will update and maintain the lists for purposes of publicizing public meetings and for keeping interested parties apprised of project developments. The list will contain area residents and businesses, as well as chambers of commerce, civic associations, community groups, educational facilities, health care facilities, and other institutions.

- 5. Inquiry Log** – The study team has developed a project inquiry process for tracking those project inquiries that are received during the EIS. Each inquiry will be logged and stored in the project database. An acknowledgement of inquiry receipt will be sent by the study team to those submitting parties.

2.2 MEETINGS

Public meetings provide an opportunity for direct communication between the GCL study team and the public. Formal meetings will include Public Scoping Meetings, Informational Sessions, and Public Hearings. Informal group or individual meetings can be requested by local or state officials, community or interest groups, major employers, stakeholders and any other group representing a specific geographic area or having a direct interest in the project.

2.2.1 Public Scoping Meetings

The study team will conduct public scoping meetings to receive formal comment and input from the public on the Draft Scoping Document. The public scoping meetings will be held in convenient locations accessible by transit. Two evening meetings and a mid-afternoon meeting will be held to maximize participation from local stakeholders. Each scoping meeting will be comprised of an Information Session, a Presentation and a Formal Comment Period. Comment forms will be available, and may be completed either at the meeting, submitted through the project website, mailed, or faxed to the study team. Formal verbal testimony will also be transcribed for public record by a stenographer at the meetings. Public comments can be submitted throughout the scoping meetings and up to 30 days after the last scoping meeting. Project materials, including maps, the Draft Scoping Document, and a project summary, will be available at the meetings. Upon request, arrangements will be made for those individuals requiring special assistance during the meetings. Information gathered from the meetings will be recorded in the project documentation.

The public scoping meetings are scheduled as follows:

Public Meeting #1

Thursday, May 6, 2010

5:30pm -8:30pm

Camden County College

Camden Technology Center

200 North Broadway, Camden, NJ 08102

Public Meeting #2 / #3

Tuesday, May 11, 2010

Afternoon Session: 1:30pm-4:30pm

Evening Session: 5:30pm-8:30pm

Rowan University – Henry M. Rowan Building

201 Mullica Hill Road, Glassboro, NJ 08028

2.2.2 Targeted Outreach Meetings

The study team will meet with elected officials, stakeholders, major employers and other interested parties at critical points during the project or upon request. These briefings will be held to keep the affected communities, employers, universities, stakeholders and others in the project area and the

region informed and involved. Information compiled from the briefings will be recorded in the project documentation.

2.2.3 Public Information Session Meetings

Two public information sessions will be hosted by the study team at critical points during the EIS. The first public information session will be held before the publication of the Draft EIS, and the second public information session will be held before the publication of the Final EIS. The approach to these sessions will be as follows:

- Ample notification will be provided to the public through a variety of media advertisements, in addition to consistent print material posted throughout the project area.
- Members of the public will be greeted by the study team to obtain contact information and explain the informational session.
- The study team will staff informational displays covering various aspects of the process to allow members of the public to gather pertinent information from the planning/engineering professionals and DRPA/PATCO staff.
- The last informational display will provide the public with an opportunity to submit comments on the project.

2.2.4 Public Hearings on Draft and Final EIS

The study team will conduct public hearings to receive comment and input on the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS will be circulated for review prior to the public hearings. The public comment period will be at least 45 days, and will be set to provide adequate time following the hearings to receive additional written comments. Formal testimony given at the hearings will be transcribed for public record by a stenographer. Comment forms will be available, and may be completed either at the meeting, submitted through the project website, mailed, or faxed to the study team. Comments received during the hearing process will be reviewed and addressed as appropriate in the Final EIS. The hearings will be held within the GCL region. The hearings will follow a similar format as the public scoping meetings. Information gathered from the hearings will be recorded in the Final EIS.

2.3 PROJECT WEBSITE

The project website www.GlassboroCamdenLine.com operates as an informational tool for the public, stakeholders, interest groups, major employers and others. The design of the website is consistent with the graphic design of project informational material. The site allows access to the project information material in a downloadable format. The website also allows the public to contact the study team and submit written comment forms. The website will be updated at key milestones throughout the project. It will also be a vehicle to announce upcoming public information sessions and public hearings. The study team will monitor the website for utilization, extent of activity, updates and receipt of comments.

2.4 PROJECT PRINT MATERIALS

The study team, will produce and distribute project meeting flyers, project update notifications, mailers, meeting handouts, fact sheets and other print material. These materials will be prepared in English, and can be translated into Spanish upon request. Project materials will be available to download from the project website, and will be created and distributed at appropriate points during the EIS phase. Public locations, such as libraries, educational facilities, employers, governmental offices, local eateries, post offices, chambers of commerce, tourism locations, community groups, shopping malls, entertainment venues, religious organizations and other public facilities will be identified, for dissemination of project information. Written comment forms will be designed and developed according to the phase of the project, and will include the opportunity to provide both subjective and objective feedback.

2.5 MEDIA RELATIONS

The study team will provide announcements through various media sources about upcoming project meetings and events. Additional media efforts related to the project may include writing articles for smaller news organizations, community-based publications, local radio/cable stations, employer newsletters and tourism publications. The study team will also coordinate with a diverse group of media outlets to disseminate information to the various communities throughout the study area that are traditionally underserved.

2.6 PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

The project information hotline, (856) 968-2252, is another way for the general public to call to request project information, request special needs and to express a project-related comment. The project hotline includes a recorded message that will dispense the latest project information, upcoming meetings/events and other project contact information. The hotline will be available to the public seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Inquiries requiring a response will be coordinated through the Public Involvement Liaison with the study team and DRPA/PATCO. The project hotline will be publicized during public scoping meetings, information sessions and public hearing announcements. The hotline number will be displayed on the project website, as well as printed on newsletters, print material and informational packets sent to news media and other interested parties.

Project correspondence sent by mail should be addressed to Ms. Victoria Malaszecki, Public Involvement Liaison, Envision Consultants, Ltd. PO Box 536, Mullica Hill, NJ 08062.

2.7 RECORD OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The GCL study team will prepare a report on public involvement that memorializes the outreach activities outlined in this plan. The study team will also compile a summary of public involvement events and progress after each round of meetings.