Another new Chicago-East Coast train?

By Ken Prendergast
OARP Vice-President

Amtrak's booming mail and package express business has again prompted the company to consider expanding the number of trains between the East Coast and Chicago, possibly as early as April. While the move is intended to expand Amtrak's mail and express hauling capacity, it would also mean more departure options for passengers.

The Toledo Blade reported in January that the new service, which could be called the Manhattan Limited, would link New York City and Chicago via Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. In Ohio, the new train is proposed to serve stations in Toledo, Sandusky, Elyria, Cleveland, and Alliance.

Can you spot the passenger cars in this Amtrak train? But passenger trains like this, laden with mail and express cars, are now common across Ohio. New trains like the proposed Manhattan Limited and other possible additions will depend on more diverse, non-passenger revenues to make them a reality. Here, the eastbound Pennsylvania on Feb. 13, 1999, crosses northern Ohio.

Scenario controversial

After five months without a meeting, a steering committee working to establish passenger rail service between Cleveland and Columbus gathered Feb. 23 to ponder a new scenario to implement that service. The rail service would be a two-year demonstration to see if Ohioans will ride trains.

The new operating scenario being considered would respond to expensive conditions placed on the passenger rail project by CSX Transportation Inc. CSX, a large freight railroad company, owns all but 12 miles of the 136-mile Cleveland-Columbus (2-C) rail line. The remainder of the line, from Berea to Cleveland, is owned by Norfolk Southern Corp.

The 2-C Steering Committee is proposing that its goal of two daily round trips be met by a single train running back and forth, rather than by two trains
Amtrak's mail and express hauling capacity, it would also mean more departure options for passengers.

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This would mean the addition of a fourth daily round trip between Chicago and Cleveland, and a third daily round trip through Alliance. As recently as 1990, the Chicago-Cleveland route had just one round trip train a day — the Lake Shore Limited — while Alliance had no passenger service.

Better yet, the Manhattan Limited would serve Ohio cities in daylight hours, according to the Toledo Blade.

Can you spot the passenger cars in this Amtrak train? But passenger trains like this, laden with mail and express cars, are now common across Ohio. New trains like the proposed Manhattan Limited and other possible additions will depend on more diverse, non-passenger revenues to make them a reality. Here, the eastbound Pennsylvania on Feb. 12 slices across northern Ohio with three passenger cars and 22 mail/express cars in tow.

Return to Ohio

After two years of sharing this newsletter's pages with passenger rail advocates in Indiana and Michigan, it became clear that the experiment wasn't working. There simply was too much rail news coming out of each state to fit into a manageable newsletter.

The return of the Ohio Passenger Rail News means more Ohio-only content and a more frequent publication schedule. We hope you like the restored format, and will contribute more rail/transit news and photographs so we can make this newsletter truly representative of Ohio.

The Passenger Rail News
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Bay Village OH 44140-3017

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

What's Inside...

» Action Alert - page three
» Waterfront Line attracts housing, development
» Amtrak service to Lima?
» Ohio’s ridership soars
» “Train of Thought”
» Cincinnati station sought
» Light rail: the survey says
As we enter the 21st century, Ohio could be in a very good position when it comes to rail passenger service. That position is based mostly on the geographic location of our state and the opportunities for new and improved rail services that are beginning to emerge.

These opportunities include the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, Amtrak's Market-Based Network Analysis, Amtrak's mail and package shipping growth, and new high-speed rail projects in New York and Pennsylvania.

Between Amtrak's mail/express business growth and the company's Market-Based Network Analysis (which will identify possible new routes and services), the next decade could look like the 1960s played in reverse. The stormy sixties saw passenger ridership steadily dropping—almost as quickly as railroad mail and express contracts were lost to trucks and planes.

To cut costs, individual trains between St. Louis or Chicago and the East Coast cities of Boston, New York, or Washington were combined into trunk-line trains. At Albany or Harrisburg, they would branch out to their final destinations. In some cases, short-distance trains on routes such as Cleveland-Cincinnati or Detroit-Toledo were scheduled to feed the longer-distance trains.

As long-distance trains faded, so did the short-haul connecting routes. By the time Amtrak arrived in 1971, most Ohio passenger rail routes were gone.

Then, in the 1990s, new services were added and old routes restored. Since 1996, Amtrak has added the Three Rivers, Pennsylvanian, and Kentucky Cardinal to Ohio and surrounding areas. More new trains are in the offing to accommodate the growth of ridership and mail/express.

But a new wrinkle has been added to this 1960s film in reverse...high-speed rail. Instead of seeking all-new, billion-dollar bullet trains, high-speed rail is arriving in baby steps. This decade will see 100+ mph trains between Chicago and Detroit, and possibly, high-speed services from Chicago to Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Toledo.

Chicago-East Coast trains may ride on the coattails of these improvements, and of similar high-speed projects announced in New York and Pennsylvania. The end result could be more than just faster trips in short-distance travel markets, but vastly faster long-distance trains. Ridership and mail/express...
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Your articles and news briefs should be typed and double-spaced, though very short items may be legibly written. Preferably, send hard copy with IBM-compatible text files on 3½" disks. Submissions via e-mail to:

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Chicago-East Coast trains may ride on the coattails of these improvements, and of similar high-speed projects announced in New York and Pennsylvania. The end result could be more than just faster trips in short-distance travel markets, but vastly faster long-distance trains. Ridership and mail/express business could snowball.

Imagine a long-distance train like the Lake Shore Limited, departing the Windy City on tracks upgraded for high-speed, short-distance, Chicago-Cleveland trains. Using that fringe benefit, the Lake Shore makes the run from Chicago to Cleveland in about four hours.

But it’s not done yet. Continuing east another 187 miles to Buffalo is still a quick, three-hour run. From Buffalo to New York City, the Lake Shore capitalizes on the high-speed rail improvements in the Empire Corridor. It arrives the Big Apple only six hours after departing Buffalo.

Thus, even though the high-speed rail investments are intended to benefit short-haul trains, the Lake Shore makes the Chicago-New York run in just 13 hours—six hours better than the present schedule, and three hours faster than the quickest-ever carding.

Of course, if our political leaders, Amtrak officials and others fail to capitalize on these potential opportunities that are beginning to materialize, the future won’t be as bright as it could be. But, with a new century before us, it’s hard not to be positive while imagining all that is possible.

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O’Leary quits as ORDC head

Executive Director job open

COLUMBUS — Thomas M. O’Leary has moved on to a bigger job while bringing him back to near his hometown of Galion. His resignation as executive director of the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC), and the lack of a permanent successor, leaves the future direction of the state commission in an unclear situation.

This is particularly true when it comes to the state’s policy concerning passenger rail service. Until his replacement is named, it will be difficult to tell what impact O’Leary’s departure will have on rail passenger service on Ohio.

Mr. O’Leary was the first executive director hired to lead the ORDC, a state commission formed in 1994 to promote the development and improvement of railroads in Ohio. He left to become deputy director of District 3 at the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODoT), located in Ashland, northeast of Mansfield. Mr. O’Leary is a resident of Galion, located just west of Mansfield, meaning his daily commute will be significantly shorter. Despite the fact that his job at the ORDC was in Columbus, Mr. O’Leary never moved from Galion. He also will preside over a much larger annual budget at ODoT’s District 3 offices than he did at the ORDC.

“Tom did an excellent job as executive director,” said James E. Betts, ORDC chairman. “He had enormous energy and the ability to analyze rail needs and to select and bring to fruition projects where the commission’s involvement helped create jobs and improve Ohio’s rail system.”

One of the most prominent projects was the development of station facilities for rail passengers. However, no new state-funded, intra-state passenger rail services started operations while he was executive director.

A passenger rail effort was begun during his tenure — the development of final cost figures prior to a possible funding recommendation for starting service linking Cleveland and Columbus. This effort remains unfinished. That task falls to his permanent successor, or possibly to acting Executive Director William S. Tompos, depending on how long it takes a search committee to find a permanent replacement.

Mr. Tompos, who has been ORDC’s secretary-treasurer since 1996, was named acting director by ORDC’s nine-member commission at a meeting Jan. 31. He will continue to serve as ORDC’s fiscal officer, and as executive director until July, which is when he will retire. Thus the search committee will also look for a new secretary-treasurer.

There also have been changes in the commission’s membership. Ohio Rep. Sally Perz (R-Toledo) who was a non-voting member, plus Tim Davis of Akron and Jim Seney of the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), both voting members, have resigned from the commission. Replacing Mr. Seney as a representative of the ODOD is Matthew Dietrich. OARP will miss the pro-passerenger rail contributions of Sen. Perz and Mr. Seney at commission meetings. The vacancies left by Rep. Perz and Mr. Davis have not been filled.

Current commission members are Chairman Betts, Ohio Rep. John Bender (D-Elyria) who is a non-voting member, Charles Brown, Mr. Dietrich, Ohio Sen. Robert Hagan (D-Youngstown), William Thomas (ODOD), and Matthew Dietrich (as non-voting).

Freight railroad meltdown eases

After one of the worst afflictions of delayed trains, most Amtrak services through Ohio have returned to running on or close to their schedules. Unfortunately, not all trains have seen their on-time performance improve.

Poor planning and execution of the June 1, 1999 acquisition and split-up of Conrail Corp.’s assets by freight railroads CSX Inc. and Norfolk Southern Corp. (NS) resulted in a meltdown of rail operations in the Eastern U.S. Rail lines and switching yards became clogged with freight trains, causing long and frequent delays to Amtrak trains and their customers (see the December 1999 issue of “Passenger Rail News”).

First to suffer the operational meltdown was NS, causing delays to Amtrak trains using its routes, particularly across northern Ohio. While NS was getting its act together in December, CSX had gone in the opposite direction. CSX officials said, however, that the Conrail split was only one reason for its problems. They also cited freight traffic growth and the need to divert freight traffic away from CSX-owned lines in the state commission's territory.

Since all but one Amtrak service through Ohio uses a combination of CSX or NS routes to complete their East Coast-Chicago runs, rail passengers haven’t caught much of a break since June 1. The Philadelphia-Chicago Pennsylvanian uses an all-NS route.

The least punctual Amtrak service has been the New York City-Chicago Three Rivers, which serves stations in the Ohio cities of Youngstown, Akron, and Fostoria. Lately, this service has suffered serious and frequent delays on CSX-owned tracks in western Ohio and across Indiana.
meaning his daily commute will be significantly shorter. Despite the fact that his job at the ODOD was in Columbus, Mr. O'Leary never moved from Galion. He also will preside over a much larger annual budget at ODoT's District 3 offices than he did at the ODRC.

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The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers noted Mr. O'Leary's strengths of being a quick study of rail issues and infrastructure. Also, during his tenure at the ODRC, Mr. O'Leary oversaw the creation of a policy in which the state would financially assist the construction or reno-

Your help is needed to advocate two legislative initiatives that would pump literally billions of dollars into intercity passenger rail improvements!

In response to pressure from a pro-rail coalition of more than 20 governors, the Clinton Administration has included in its fiscal year 2003 budget a new program to expand and improve passenger rail services. Not only does the administration's budget call for $521 million in general spending for Amtrak operations, it also includes $468 million for a new intercity passenger rail improvement fund. These add up to Amtrak's "federal government. Congress is already under pressure from the highway lobby which is arguing that this money should go to highways, not rail. But these are your tax dollars, not theirs! Tell Congress that more and wider highways only encourage more congestion, and that fast trains would lessen highway congestion, promote rein-

Another important piece of legislation pending before Congress — Senate bill 1900 — would create the High Speed Rail Investment Act and raise $10 billion for rail projects across the country (see "U.S. Senate bill would fund faster trains" on Page Nine). In Ohio, several routes could eventually benefit from these federal funds.

Call or write your Senators and Congressional representative today! Dial the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121. Write your Senators at The U.S. Senate, Washington D.C. 20510 or via e-mail by visiting www.senate.gov on the Internet. Write your Congressional representative at The House of Representatives, Washington D.C. 20515 or be e-mail via www.house.gov on the Internet.

Please forward copies of any responses you receive to: Bill Hutchison, President 474 Delaware Ct Westerville, OH 43081

The source of funding for the new improvement fund are excess gas tax revenues collected by the federal government. Congress is already under pressure from the highway lobby which is arguing that this money should go to highways, not rail. But these are your tax dollars, not theirs! Tell Congress that more and wider highways only encourage more congestion, and that fast trains would lessen highway congestion, promote rein-

ACTIONS ALERT

Quote: The available (railway) infrastructure is filling up. And that fact will bring changes in how freight and passenger carriers deal with each other in the future. Life is going to get harder for all of us. Just how hard probably depends on how well we learn to work together.

Unquote - James W. McClatchy, Senior Vice President Strategic Planning, Norfolk Southern Corp.

Before the Railway Age, Norfolk Southern Corp.

Train on Freight Railroads, West Virginia

Train on Railroads, West Virginia

Train on Railroads, West Virginia

Train on Railroads, West Virginia

Train on Railroads, West Virginia

Train on Railroads, West Virginia

Train on Railroads, West Virginia
2-C regaining its momentum

"2-C Corridor", from page one –

the meet of two passenger trains in this vicinity cause a conflict, but CSX argues that its freight train operations could be delayed. CSX not only argued for the construction a second track between Shelby and Greenwich, but also a 3.5-mile side track near the junction of its busy freight lines at Greenwich.

Construction costs for these added tracks are estimated by CSX at more than $40 million which, by themselves, exceed the $32 million capital cost ceiling that the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODoT) placed on the entire 2-C project before it established the 2-C Steering Committee. That $32 million was supposed to include track improvements, provision of station facilities, acquisition of trains, and other capital costs. It does not include operating subsidies, which are being calculated separately.

Officials from Amtrak and the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC), which is overseeing the 2-C Steering Committee’s work, have requested a meeting with CSX officials to see if the one-train operating scenario for 2-C will cause them to drop their requirement for a second main track between Galion and Shelby. A new 3.5-mile-long side track just south of Greenwich, costing $5.5 million, would probably still be needed. At press-time no meeting has been scheduled. The total estimated capital cost of the 2-C project, using the one-train scenario is $25.5 million, with the state paying $24.4 million. The other $1.1 million would be provided by communities or the federal government as their shares of building stations.

Conceptually, using one train to make two round trips could mean southbound departures from Cleveland at about 7 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., with northbound departures from Columbus at about 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Travel time for passenger trains between Cleveland and Columbus is estimated at 2 hours and 45 minutes.

2-C ridership to drop by only 8,000 trips per year.

Adding more trains over the route would be extremely expensive, especially for a two-year demonstration project. If more than two daily round-trip passenger trains are routed over their busiest tracks north of Greenwich to Berea, CSX will require the construction of a third track over this 42-mile segment. Initial cost estimates for building this third track range between $80 million and $100 million.

More frequent passenger service would also require the construction of the second track between Greenwich and Shelby, adding another $40 million to the tab, CSX officials say. These and other costs, including higher subsidies, could scare away state government officials who are already skeptical of passenger rail’s abilities of attracting travelers.

An intriguing development is the possibility of acquiring a state-of-the-art, European-designed Talgo train for use during the demonstration. Leasing this equipment (rather than buying and rebuilding existing Amtrak equipment) would not only reduce train acquisition costs from $6.6 million to as little as $3.4 million, but it should also make the service more attractive.

The Talgo train features a high-tech design and amenities that have proven to draw ridership. It also has a pendulum mechanism in the wheel sets that allows the entire train to tilt through curves. This counteracts centrifugal forces and permits the raising of speed restrictions on the tightest curves. But since the tracks in the 2-C Corridor are so straight, the Talgo’s greatest asset to Ohio may be limited to its high-tech design.

Talgo trains are in regular operation in the Cascades corridor between Eugene, OR, Portland, OR, Seattle, WA, and Vancouver, BC. When Talgo equipment was used on this route during a demonstration period, ridership skyrocketed. After the demonstration ended and regular train equipment returned, ridership fell. Amtrak and the states of Washington and Oregon funded the permanent acquisition of several Talgo trains for this route, and ridership has been going back up ever since.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (OARP) strongly recommends that a Talgo train be leased for the Cleveland-Columbus demonstration to make the service more attractive while reducing equipment acquisition costs.

An alternate site for a southwest Cleveland station

Another element of the 2-C project needs to be debated. The 2-C committee has recommended that a station in southwest suburban Cleveland be located on a new, passenger-only track in Berea. This track would connect the CSX line from Columbus to Berea via a new tunnel.

An alternate site for a southwest Cleveland station would be proposed.

CLEVELAND AMTRAK
and Shelby. A new 3.5-mile-long side track just south of Greenwich, costing $5.5 million, would probably still be needed. At press-time no meeting has been scheduled. The total estimated capital cost of the 2-C project, using the one-train scenario is $25.5 million, with the state paying $24.4 million. The other $1.1 million would be provided by communities or the federal government as their shares of building stations.

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Clearly, there are positives and negatives with this scenario. On the plus side, if the one-train scenario causes CSX to drop its requirement for a second main track between Greenwich and Shelby, that will allow the project to stay on or below budget and greatly improve 2-C’s chances of winning state funding.

Another positive of this scenario is that, with only one set of train equipment to operate and maintain, 2-C’s annual subsidies are expected to drop from $4.9 million to $3.7 million, again raising the chances that the state would pay these costs. It should be noted that the state would acquire a spare locomotive to allow for a regular cycle of maintenance.

On the down side, the schedule doesn’t permit much business travel, even if the layovers at Columbus and Cleveland were shortened to allow an earlier evening departure from the capital city.

However, ORDC planners say that, with just two daily round trips, the service wouldn’t be frequent enough anyway to attract many business travelers. Expected rail customers include college students, tourists, and other discretionary travelers seeking an alternative to using Interstate 71 during its 10-year reconstruction. ORDC planners estimate the one-train scenario would cause
Another new Chicago-East Coast train?

— "Manhattan", from page one —

Blade. Based on their report and on existing Amtrak schedules along its proposed route, the eastbound Manhattan Limited would depart Chicago about 12 noon every day, South Bend at 2:30 p.m., Toledo at 5 p.m., Cleveland at 7:15 p.m., Pittsburgh before 11 p.m., Philadelphia after 7 a.m., and arriving New York City about 9:20 a.m.

Westbound, the train is proposed to depart New York City at 10:45 p.m., Philadelphia before 1 a.m., Pittsburgh about 8:45 a.m., Cleveland just after 12 noon, Toledo about 2:40 p.m., South Bend at 5 p.m., and arriving Chicago about 6:30 p.m. This list includes only the major cities along the route and does not identify proposed departure times at the many smaller cities in between. The train would operate over routes segments entirely owned by Amtrak and Norfolk Southern Corp. (NS).

Another project being considered by Amtrak — this one at the behest of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority — is restoration of rail service between Toledo and Detroit, the Toledo Blade reported. It is not yet known where Amtrak would find train equipment to restore Detroit-Toledo service or to implement the Manhattan Limited.

In 1996, Amtrak's growing mail and express business allowed it to afford restoring service on the Chicago-New York City Broadway Limited route through Nappanee, IN, Youngstown, Akron, and Fostoria, OH. Budget cuts prompted Amtrak to eliminate the Broadway in 1995, but the train was brought back a year later under the name Three Rivers.

In reporting on the demise of the Lake Shore split, the Empire State Passengers Association in New York state said CSX's opposition stemmed from the fact that CSX has never signed a revenue-sharing agreement with Amtrak for the hauling of mail and express on passenger trains. Other freight railroads, including NS, already have such an agreement with Amtrak.

"We don't make money on Amtrak, in fact, we lose money," said Paul Reistrup, CSX's director of passenger coordination. "We'll go along with the STB decision on this (the federal Surface Transportation Board's ruling allowing Amtrak to haul package express), but Amtrak will have to jump through all the hoops."

While Amtrak officials say they haven't given up hope on the possibility of splitting the Lake Shore Limited into separate Chicago-Boston and Chicago-New York City trains, the words of Mr. Reistrup (a former president of Amtrak) give the indication that it will be difficult to put more express-hauling passenger trains on CSX routes.

With this in mind, it is no wonder that Amtrak is interested in starting the Manhattan Limited on the NS-owned route. Underlining this are the facts that the Lake Shore is already bursting at the seams with mail and express business, that NS has a package express revenue-sharing deal with Amtrak, and that Congress has mandated Amtrak become financially self-sufficient by 2003.
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More mail and express shipping contracts prompted Amtrak in 1998 to extend its Philadelphia-Pittsburgh Pennsylvania service west to Chicago, over the route of its Capitol Limited via Cleveland, Toledo, and South Bend. This was the first daytime passenger train service over much of this route since Amtrak began in 1971.

Amtrak last year proposed another East Coast-Chicago service that would have crossed Indiana and Ohio in daylight hours. This would have involved “splitting” the Lake Shore Limited into separate trains between Chicago and Albany, NY. Beyond Albany, the Lake Shore would have continued its two-train operations to New York City.

THE RAVENNA CONNECTION

- Secondary connection - vacant track bed
- to Cleveland and Chicago
- vacant track bed
- business
- Hazen Ave.
- to Youngstown and Pittsburgh
- to Akron and Chicago
- Norfolk Southern
- Diamond St.
- vacant lands, possible station site
- to Alliance and Pittsburgh
- CSX Railroad

 Ken Prendergast map
Restructure the **Pennsylvanian**

While Amtrak’s Chicago-Philadelphia *Pennsylvanian* service continues to perform well financially, it continues to come up short in attracting passenger ridership. That may seem like a contradiction, but not when the lack of ridership is being compensated by this train’s robust mail and package express business.

Amtrak estimated that, when it extended the *Pennsylvanian* in 1998 from its former western terminus in Pittsburgh to Chicago via Cleveland and Toledo, this service would attract new passenger and freight customers. Unfortunately, only half of that goal has been achieved.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (OARP) is concerned about this situation, not only because the train is failing to meet travelers’ needs, but OARP is concerned because Amtrak appears content to leave the *Pennsylvanian* alone, even though some improvements are clearly needed to boost ridership. This passenger rail service, unlike most in the region, travels across Ohio during daylight hours. It serves the Northern Ohio cities of Toledo, Sandusky, Elyria, Cleveland, and Alliance with daily eastbound and westbound runs. On the bright side, ridership at these Ohio cities is way up (see “Ohio Amtrak Ridership” on Page One).

Ridership at Sandusky jumped by 52 percent in 1999 thanks to a doubling of Amtrak service and a total renovation of the city’s 19th-century depot. The service expansion and station renovation also brought much public attention to Amtrak’s availability at Sandusky.

OARP and the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) have asked Amtrak to reschedule this train, and extend its route eastward to New York City. This would require Amtrak to devote another set of train equipment to this service on a permanent basis. Under normal conditions, Amtrak provides *Pennsylvanian* service with two train sets.

But when Norfolk Southern Corp. (NS) — the freight hauler that owns the tracks over which the *Pennsylvanian* operates — acquired the assets of Conrail Corp., Amtrak trains began suffering serious on-time performance problems. During that time, Amtrak devoted three train sets to protect the *Pennsylvanian*’s schedule. If Amtrak will commit three train sets to the *Pennsylvanian* permanently, this service can be rescheduled and extended to New York City.

Under a scenario proposed by OARP and NARP, the eastbound *Pennsylvanian* would depart Chicago about 10 a.m. and arrive New York City at 7:30 a.m. Westbound, OARP suggests this service could leave New York at about 6:30 p.m. and pull into Chicago around 2:30 p.m.

These eastbound and westbound revisions are only several hours different than what Amtrak is now proposing for its new Chicago-New York City *Manhattan Limited* service (see “Another new Chicago-East Coast train?” on Page One). If this new train begins running soon, Amtrak may argue that the rescheduling the *Pennsylvanian* is not needed.

While OARP is overjoyed that Amtrak is considering starting another train service to Ohio, we are not satisfied with the current *Pennsylvanian* schedule alone, even with limited service.

*The Passenger Rail News, March 2000*
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While OARP is overjoyed that Amtrak is considering starting another train service to Ohio, we are not satisfied with the current Pennsylvania schedule and urge that it be adjusted to serve passengers' needs — not just the needs of those shipping mail and package express.

Hopefully, Amtrak hasn't forgotten its primary mission of serving rail passengers in its necessary drive to carry more mail and package express. But when it comes to the Pennsylvania's operation, the balance between passengers and those shipping mail/express appears to be weighted in the freight shipper's favor.

OARP membership renewal reminder

While we have received most of our membership renewals for 2000, many have yet to come in to OARP Treasurer Tom Allen. Also, Mr. Allen reminds members not to staple or tape checks to your renewal cards as it slows down his processing as well as the bank's.

Additionally, if a member wants a receipt by checking the box on the renewal card, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. That will save OARP a great deal of time and money considering the number of receipts that are requested by members.

We appreciate your renewals as they comprise the bulk of OARP's funding.

Light-rail extension "promising"

CLEVELAND — Results of a major investment study commissioned by the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) predict that extending the Waterfront Line to create a downtown rail loop would attract 780,000 new riders each year and be a catalyst for $450 million in new jobs and development.

Waterfront Line Phase II would extend the four-year-old light-rail line two miles south from the lakefront along East 17th Street as a streetcar to Prospect Avenue, then to either East 14th, East 21st or East 22nd streets, run east on Community College Avenue, and turn south again on East 30th Street to reconnect with the rapid transit system.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers has supported the Waterfront Line Phase II project, which would offer bi-directional travel around this downtown loop. If GCRTA's Board of Trustees endorses a preferred routing, the project would undergo preliminary engineering. Federal funds will be sought for the project, which meets or exceeds the federal government's funding criteria.

and pulls into Chicago at 12:26 a.m.

Those times mean that the Pennsylvania fails to connect with most, if not all Amtrak and commuter trains in those cities. And, as many Ohioans should know, most travelers simply will not be attracted to Amtrak trains that "serve" them in the wee hours of the morning. This has resulted in the Pennsylvania frequently carrying no more than a dozen passengers for hundreds of miles of its route.

Most other Amtrak trains which serve all or part of the Pennsylvania's route carry healthy passenger loads, and are often sold out. To passenger rail advocates, it seems obvious that the Pennsylvania needs to be rescheduled to attract more riders.

Light-rail extension "promising"

CLEVELAND — Results of a major investment study commissioned by the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) predict that extending the Waterfront Line to create a downtown rail loop would attract 780,000 new riders each year and be a catalyst for $450 million in new jobs and development.

Waterfront Line Phase II would extend the four-year-old light-rail line two miles south from the lakefront along East 17th Street as a streetcar to Prospect Avenue, then to either East 14th, East 21st or East 22nd streets, run east on Community College Avenue, and turn south again on East 30th Street to reconnect with the rapid transit system.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers has supported the Waterfront Line Phase II project, which would offer bi-directional travel around this downtown loop. If GCRTA's Board of Trustees endorses a preferred routing, the project would undergo preliminary engineering. Federal funds will be sought for the project, which meets or exceeds the federal government's funding criteria.
Big projects along Waterfront Line

A Green Line train (at left) glides along the Waterfront Line, past the massive Otis Terminal warehouse which is being converted into an apartment building. More than 250 loft apartments are being built into the upper floors of the structure, with a pair of restaurants on the ground floor. The Otis Terminal building is a short walk to the Flats East Bank Station. One station that continues to depend on the tourist trade is the North Coast Station (at right), located a short walk from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, Great Lakes Science Center, Steamship William J. Mather Museum, U.S.S. Cod WWII submarine, and the future site of the Crawford Transportation Museum.

Tourist line attracting housing, office towers

By Ken Prendergast
OARP Vice-President

CLEVELAND — “There’s something about a train that’s magnetic.” That variation on a popular slogan promoting a train’s magic accurately describes the light-rail Waterfront Line’s ability to attract housing development.

The line has served as a landmark for luxury condominiums selling for more than $1 million each. A second phase could add a 490,000-square-foot office tower.

The project is named Courthouse Plaza because the site was the former location of the Cuyahoga County Courthouse. Two office towers and a six-level, 1,000-car parking garage on the south side of the rail line and on the north side a 10-story hotel.

Connecting the office building and hotel would be 1,000 condominiums. A pair of parks would be added on the north and south sides of the rail line.
A Green Line train (at left) glides along the Waterfront Line, past the massive Otis Terminal Warehouse, which is being converted into an apartment building. More than 250 loft apartments are being built into the upper floors of the structure, with a pair of restaurants on the ground floor. The Otis Terminal building is a short walk to the Flats East Bank Station. One station that continues to depend on the tourist trade is the North Coast Station (at right), located a short walk from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, Great Lakes Science Center, Steamship William J. Mather Museum, U.S.S. Cod WWII submarine, and the future site of the Crawford Transportation Museum.

Tourist line attracting housing, office towers

By Ken Prendergast
OARP Vice-President

CLEVELAND — “There’s something about a train that’s magnetic.” That variation on a popular slogan promoting a train’s magic accurately describes the light-rail Waterfront Line’s ability to keep attracting new building projects near its stations.

Less than two months apart, two huge office-hotel complexes with a combined value of more than $200 million were announced to be built with the Waterfront Line in mind. They would add to the nearly $700 million worth of building projects already built, underway or planned along the 2.2-mile extension of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority’s (GCRTA) Blue and Green lines from Shaker Heights. The extension was built in 1996 primarily to serve tourist destinations in the Flats district and along the lakefront, as well as special-event traffic downtown.

But what wasn’t expected is the amount of new development projects occurring at or near its stations. Most of those projects are being caused or shaped by the Waterfront Line.

In December, the Buckherd Group announced a $130 million development called Courthouse Plaza between the Tower City and Settlers Landing stations. Construction should begin this spring on a 20-story hotel, above the junction of GCRTA’s Red Line to the airport and the Waterfront Line. The top seven floors of the hotel will actually house 12 luxury condominiums selling for more than $1 million each. A second phase could add a 490,000-square-foot office tower.

The project is named Courthouse Plaza because it would rise next to a 22-story, $200 million federal courthouse, now under construction. Between the two buildings, a park-like plaza is proposed, below which would be a parking garage.

However, pedestrian and transit access is a key component. Indoor walkways will connect with the federal courthouse’s connector to Tower City Center’s stores and GCRTA’s main rapid transit station as well as to the walkway to the Gateway sports complex (Gund Arena and Jacobs Field). In the other direction, an enclosed walkway will extend westward, with a public-access elevator opening up next to the Settlers Landing station.

Then, in January, the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority named The Amsdell Companies to build a $70 million office and hotel complex on the downtown lakefront, bracketing a hairpin curve on the Waterfront Line. At that spot, the rail line was designed to accommodate a station for an aquarium, neither of which were built.

Amsdell company officials said finishing construction on the light-rail station is “crucial” to their office-hotel complex.

Tower City Center’s stores and GCRTA’s main rapid transit station as well as to the walkway to the Gateway sports complex (Gund Arena and Jacobs Field). In the other direction, an enclosed walkway will extend westward, with a public-access elevator opening up next to the Settlers Landing station.

Each project involves construction of a 20-story office tower and a six-level, 1,000-car parking garage on the south side of the rail line and on the north side a 10-story hotel.

Connecting the office building and hotel would be an enclosed walkway over the Waterfront Line station, with elevators and stairwells descending from the walkway to the station’s platforms. Two later phases to the project could bring its final tag to more than $100 million — a pair of smaller office buildings may be added to either side of the hotel.

The biggest project along the Waterfront Line has been the $300 million Cleveland Browns Stadium. While looking for a site, city planners wanted the stadium built downtown, next to highways and a rail transit line. GCRTA built a $4 million station on the Waterfront Line that is a field-goal kick away from the football stadium. Nearly 20 percent of football fans in 1999 used transit, primarily the Waterfront Line, to attend Browns games.

Other projects have been built, planned, or are underway along the light-rail line. These include the 25-story $70 million DoubleTree Hotel (planned), $75 million Crawford Transportation Museum (planned), $30 million Canal Park & Museum (planned), $29 million Otis Terminal Building renovation with 250 loft apartments (planned), $2 million Kirkham Place luxury townhouses (built in 1998), $28 million National Terminals renovation with 225 loft apartments (built in 1997), and the 17-story, $30 million, 220-unit Crittenden Court Apartments (built in 1996).
### Car-Free® guide is now available

After many delays, a new travel guidebook that was promoted in this newsletter last year is finally available. “Car-Free® in Cleveland” details many helpful ways to get around Greater Cleveland without a car, whether you’re visiting for the first time or you’ve lived on the North Coast all your life. The guidebook, published by Alt-Trans Cleveland, was written in part by OARP Vice-President Ken Prendergast and its publication was made possible by a grant from the Gund Foundation. Some OARP members had ordered copies, but their checks were destroyed when publishing delays became extreme. We apologize for the delays.

For your copy of “Car-Free® in Cleveland,” please send $9.00 ($6.95 for the book plus tax and shipping and handling) as a check payable to: “EcoCity Cleveland” and mail it to Alt-Trans Cleveland, c/o EcoCity Cleveland, 2841 Scarborough Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, 44118. Write in the memo section of your check “Car-Free in Cleveland.” For more information, contact Alt-Trans Cleveland by e-mail at bflamm@en.com or by phone at (216) 932-3007.

### Amtrak service to Lima, Ft. Wayne studied

Lima and Fort Wayne are participating in a study that will determine the best way to return passenger rail service to their cities, how much such a restoration would cost, and if the projected ridership would warrant it.

The two cities have been seeking Amtrak’s return since 1990, when the passenger railroad rerouted two daily services to more northerly rail lines that have been maintained for fast train speeds. The reroutes were motivated by the former Conrail Corp., which proceeded with the move.

Rider number is even more impressive considering that it is 10 times greater than Waterloo’s population of 2,000. As for Lima, its the nearest train station is in Fostoria, which also is drawing a solid patronage. No cities in this region have convenient bus or airline travel options.

Freight railroad traffic conditions may also play a significant role in a reroute decision. CSX’s ongoing operations meltdown (following its acquisition of certain Conrail assets) has prompted Amtrak on numerous occasions to curtail the Lima-Ft. Wayne service.

If the train were to leave Lima and Ft. Wayne, it would result in a loss of service to Nappanee, IN, and could result in a loss to Fostoria, depending on how the train may be rerouted. While Fostoria has just 15,000 residents and Nappanee 5,000, Lima has a population of 45,000. Ft. Wayne, which is Indiana’s second-largest city, has 170,000 residents.

Perhaps the most beneficial rerouting, in terms of serving the greatest population while causing the least amount of disruption to existing stations, would be to have the train serve Fostoria and Nappanee. The line would follow the St. Joseph river, Fostoria, and Nappanee, and Amtrak would be able to get the greatest ridership with the least amount of disruption to existing stations.
Amtrak service to Lima, Ft. Wayne studied

Lima and Fort Wayne are participating in a study that will determine the best way to return passenger rail service to their cities, how much such a restoration would cost, and if the projected ridership would warrant it.

The two cities have been seeking Amtrak’s return since 1990, when the passenger railroad rerouted two daily services to more northerly rail lines that have been maintained for fast train speeds. The reroutes were motivated by the former Conrail Corp., which proceeded with plans to downgrade its rail line through Lima and Ft. Wayne. The Ohio cities of Crestline and Canton also lost all passenger rail service from the reroute of Amtrak’s New York-Chicago Broadway Limited and Washington D.C.-Chicago Capitol Limited.

While the Capitol Limited has stabilized on its new route through Cleveland and Toledo, the Broadway Limited was eliminated in a spate of ill-advised cost-cutting moves by Amtrak in 1995. A year later, Amtrak realized its mistake and restored service on the Broadway’s reroute through Fostoria and Nappanee on CSX Inc. tracks with the new Three Rivers service.

However, the lack of population centers on the Three Rivers route west of Akron, and the lack of service to the relatively large cities of Lima and Ft. Wayne make a reroute attractive. This neglect, particularly in Ft. Wayne’s case, is evident in Amtrak statistics.

Thousands of Ft. Wayne residents are making the short trek north on Interstate 65 to the nearest Amtrak station at Waterloo. There they can catch six daily passenger trains, including the eastbound and westbound runs of the Capitol Limited. Each year, more than 20,000 people get on or off trains at the Waterloo station. That number is even more impressive considering that it is 10 times greater than Waterloo’s population of 2,000. As for Lima, its the nearest train station is in Fostoria, which also is drawing a solid patronage. No cities in this region have convenient bus or airline travel options.

Freight railroad traffic conditions may also play a significant role in a reroute decision. CSX’s ongoing operations meltdown (following its acquisition of certain Conrail assets) has prompted Amtrak on numerous occasions to reroute the Three Rivers. This was done so the Three Rivers could avoid being seriously delayed by CSX freight train congestion. The reroute Amtrak chose was over Norfolk Southern Corp. tracks west of Fostoria to Chicago via Ft. Wayne, although bypassing Lima.

To return passenger rail service to Lima and Ft. Wayne, several options are being considered. These include funding the start-up of a totally new train service into Chicago, or rerouting an existing train, such as the Three Rivers. The latter may prove to be the most feasible solution, considering the lack of population centers this train serves west of Akron, until Chicago.

If the Three Rivers is rerouted to serve Lima and Ft. Wayne, it would result in a loss of service to Nappanee, IN, and could result in a loss to Fostoria, depending on how the train may be rerouted. While Fostoria has just 15,000 residents and Nappanee 5,000, Lima has a population of 45,000. Ft. Wayne, which is Indiana’s second-largest city, has 170,000 residents.

Perhaps the most beneficial rerouting, in terms of serving the greatest population while causing the least amount of disruption to existing stations, would involve rerouting the Three Rivers west of Fostoria. Only Nappanee would lose service under this scenario.

Just west of the Fostoria Amtrak station, the Three Rivers could divert south-west-erly on Norfolk Southern tracks to Lima via Findlay. The city of Findlay is a growing city of nearly 40,000 people, but lacks a suitable station facility. This NS rail line may require some improvements to bring it up to passenger train standards.

At Lima, the Three Rivers would switch on to the former Amtrak route to Chicago via Ft. Wayne. This line, while downgraded from its earlier status as a 79 mph route, could support train speeds of 59 mph. If a waiver is granted from the Federal Railroad Administration, passenger trains could operate as fast as 70 mph. With the passing of a decade since Amtrak last served Lima and Ft. Wayne, stations in those cities would likely require repairs and other improvements.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers hopes that Lima and Ft. Wayne can be brought back onto Amtrak’s system as soon as possible. These two cities have historically supported Amtrak with excellent ridership numbers, and continue to support passenger rail service, even in its absence.
Six Flags, zero commuter trains

AURORA, OH — A project that screams for commuter rail access from Cleveland so far has not included plans for a rail link. The Six Flags amusement park company has bought Geauga Lake Park, a 100-year-old amusement park located 20 miles southeast of downtown Cleveland, next to Sea World of Ohio.

As part of its acquisition of Geauga Lake, to be renamed Six Flags Over Ohio, the company is investing $40 million on numerous new rides and attractions, including several new roller coasters. This will give it the same number of roller coasters as Cedar Point in Sandusky, OH.

Six Flags expects to attract visitors from as far away as 200-300 miles, double the current draw of Geauga Lake Park. Meanwhile, Sea World of Ohio (adjacent to Six Flags) also is planning a major expansion, while a 130,000-square-foot retail complex is slated to be built near the two parks.

With the parks’ added attractions and increasing drawing power, city officials in nearby Solon and Aurora—already besieged by road traffic from the parks each summer—are not looking forward to additional traffic. In response, the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODoT) is undertaking a traffic study of that area. So far, local officials have talked only about widening Ohio routes 43 and 306, which are the major roads in the area. ODoT officials say no state money for widening projects will be available until 2006.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers is disappointed by the lack of including commuter rail as a possible solution. This is particularly troublesome considering a little-used rail line runs Geauga Lake Park. Meanwhile, while Sea World of Ohio will have more roller coasters than Cedar Point, the tracks were ripped out east of Aurora in the early 1980s.

Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) officials are planning a demonstration commuter rail service in the coming years, from downtown Cleveland’s Amtrak station to Harper Road in Solon. The Six Flags project puts greater urgency on this demonstration project, which should be extended another six miles east to the amusement parks.

U.S. Senate bill would fund faster trains

COTA chief stays put

COLUMBUS — A day after one transit levy was approved by voters but a companion levy for service expansion failed, Ronald L. Barnes got a call from his old stomping ground in Cleveland. The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) was looking for a successor to fill the shoes of former General Manager Ronald Tober. Mr. Barnes, who was a deputy general manager for GCRTA for nine years, seemed to be the ideal candidate.

But the Central Ohio Transit Authority also thought highly of Mr. Barnes, and offered him a five-year contract extension worth $145,000 a year — a raise of 11.5 percent. He officially agreed to the deal Jan. 26. It was an offer he couldn’t refuse, and a person that Columbus shouldn’t have to do without.

The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers believes Mr. Barnes is needed in Columbus. His pro-rail vision has proven refreshing in Columbus, a city without a rail-transit system. Mr. Barnes’ continued leadership for rail transit in the capital city is essential. Equally important is his advocacy for more transit-friendly development patterns. His visionary thinking is contagious, as Mr. Barnes has prompted other Columbus-area leaders to adopt many of his ideas and policies.

Quote: Transportation is much more than getting one car from here to there. I’ve been watching Atlanta from afar. It’s incredible. The subway there is much more than just a way to get to other parts of the city. It has been a huge economic development tool. This is something we need here in Columbus.
WASHINGTON D.C. — Longtime rail advocate U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J. has presented to the Senate a bill that would raise $10 billion over 10 years so Amtrak can introduce faster trains throughout the nation. The bill, called the High Speed Rail Investment Act, is numbered S.1900. When asking your Senators or congressional representatives to support the bill, it is important to reference the bill by its number.

At press-time, in Ohio only Mike DeWine (R-OH) has signed on as a co-sponsor of S. 1900. He has consistently supported rail passenger improvements, and should be thanked for his support of the High Speed Rail Investment Act. U.S. Senator George Voinovich (R-OH) should be encouraged to sign on as a co-sponsor.

Supporters of fast passenger trains should also contact their Congressional representatives and ask them to actively support this extremely important bill.

The $10 billion would be raised by selling high-speed rail bonds by providing tax credits to bondholders, rather than by paying interest. Senator Lautenberg estimated that the proposal would cost the federal budget $3 billion over the 10-year span.

The federal funds would be used to provide 80 percent of the cost of increasing train speeds, including adding more trains and upgrading stations. The remaining 20 percent would have to be raised by communities, states and private investors. This 80/20 funding split is consistent with the federal government’s policy toward highway funding.

numerous rail passenger corridors throughout the nation would benefit from the bill, including the proposed $3.5 billion Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MRRI). The MRRI would add trains and increase speeds on a number of routes emanating from Chicago, including services to Cincinnati, Cleveland, Sandusky, Elyria, and Toledo.

If the 3-C Corridor (Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati) gains a high-speed rail designation from the U.S. Department of Transportation, cities along this route (Columbus, Dayton, Galion, Mansfield, Middletown, and Springfield) should also benefit from this bill.

Please contact your U.S. senators and representatives as soon as possible and ask them to actively support this bill (in the case of Sen. DeWine you should thank him for his support)! Tell them you would use faster passenger trains and that you are tired of having to deal with the stresses of highway and air travel. Give personal examples so they can see how their constituents would benefit from fast trains!

RTA has new CEO

CLEVELAND — Joe Calabrese, 47, began work Feb. 28 as the new Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA). He replaces Ron Tober, who resigned in October. As director of the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (Centro) in Syracuse, he oversaw an annual operating budget of $27 million, and a $50 million capital plan. In Cleveland, he will lead a much larger system, with an operating budget of $225 million, and a capital plan of nearly $1 billion.
Riverfront station site sought

CINCINNATI — Securing land for a station to accommodate frequent, 110-mph train service to Indianapolis and Chicago has accelerated the push for a detailed study of a riverfront station location. Without the study, it would be difficult for public agencies to justify buying prime riverfront land, let alone knowing how much to buy.

Last year, city-hired planners conducted an alternatives analysis to identify the best place to establish a station facility that could not only serve fast Cincinnati-Chicago passenger trains, but also Amtrak’s existing Chicago-Washington D.C. Cardinal service and future trains to Cleveland via Dayton and Columbus.

That study identified the Crosset site, just west of Cincinnati’s central riverfront and downtown area as the best station location. This site was chosen because there is available land for a station, is close to downtown, is near current and future public transit services, and has good rail access while not on or adjacent to a busy freight railroad line. However, the Crosset’s good location could make it a target for development that might preclude rail passenger service.

“Unless we get it (the Crosset site) officially designated and get moving on designs, it may go to other uses and not be available,” said Ohio Rail Development Commissioner Thomas McOwen in The Cincinnati Enquirer.

Costing just $15,000 and taking two months to complete, the study would identify the barriers and opportunities for using the Crosset site as a train station, the possibility of relocating Greyhound’s bus terminal there to unite rail and bus services, while conducting an economic impact analysis and preliminary drawings of the Indianapolis-Cincinnati corridor could be upgraded to 110-mph train speeds for $276 million and carry over 800,000 riders per year. Proposed are five passenger trains in each direction, making the Cincinnati-Chicago trip in just four hours.

Perhaps the most impressive projection is that Cincinnati-Chicago would generate revenues that exceed operating expenses by 174 percent. However, the construction costs of new or rebuilt tracks, signals and stations would still have to be shared by state and federal governments. Construction could begin as early as 2002, with fast trains up and running three years afterwards.

U.S. Senator Mike DeWine (R-OH) is co-sponsoring a bill that would allow Amtrak to sell up to $10 billion in high-speed rail bonds for projects throughout the nation (see “U.S. Senate bill would fund faster trains” on Page Nine). The bill caps the federal share of funding for high-speed rail projects at 80 percent, meaning others would have to come up with the remainder. These contributors could include a combination of sources, such as the states of Indiana and Ohio, Amtrak, as well as affected cities and counties.

OARP members should contact Sen. DeWine’s office to thank him for his support of this bill, and to encourage U.S. Senator George Voinovich (R-OH) to sign on as a co-sponsor. Also, let your Congressional representative know that this bill is in the Senate, and you want them to support it. Give personal reasons why you think faster trains are worth supporting. Don’t expect your elected officials to support trains if don’t they hear from people like you who are tired of putting up with the stresses of highways and air travel!

Light rail lifts land values

New light-rail transit lines in many U.S. cities have clearly demonstrated their attractiveness, not only in terms of ridership, but in encouraging new real estate development. The newest rail lines, in Dallas, St. Louis, and Cleveland (see “Big projects along Waterfront Line” on Page Seven), are proving their worth.

On the Illinois side of St. Louis, where a new line is being built out to Belleville and MidAmerica Airport, new housing, stores and hotels are sprouting around stations, even though the line is still under construction. Typically, it takes 5-20 years for areas around stations to see development.

In Dallas, a study conducted by the University of North Texas’ Center for Economic Development discovered that land values near Dallas Area Rapid Transit stations have grown 25 percent faster than at comparable properties that are farther away. Train service also has boosted office occupancy rates and retail sales, particularly in Dallas’ central business district.

Poll: 80% support Cincy light rail

CINCINNATI — In a poll commissioned by a metropolitan planning organization, eight of 10 Greater Cincinnati residents said they support building the proposed light-rail line along the I-71 Corri-
“Unless we get it (the Crosset site) officially designated and get moving on designs, it may go to other uses and not be available,” said Ohio Rail Development Commissioner Thomas McOwen in The Cincinnati Enquirer.

Costing just $15,000 and taking two months to complete, the study would identify the barriers and opportunities for using the Crosset site as a train station, the possibility of relocating Greyhound’s bus terminal there to unite rail and bus services, while conducting an economic impact analysis and preliminary drawings of the transportation facilities.

Meanwhile, City Councilman Todd Portune is seeking to preserve rail rights of way in the vicinity of the Crosset site. A number of rail access routes to the riverfront site are underutilized or abandoned, especially those needed to bring fast trains from Chicago into Cincinnati. While Amtrak’s Cardinal comes from Chicago, it uses a circuitous route that also has frequent freight train traffic on it.

The preferred route for 110 mph passenger trains between Cincinnati, Indianapolis, and Chicago is via a former New York Central right-of-way that once served as the mainline for fast passenger trains decades ago. During the decline of American railroads in the 1960s and 70s, a wave of route consolidations and railroad mergers rendered that line unnecessary. But with the upsurge of the rail industry and the congested conditions on highways and at airports, this rail line has become a hot commodity. In fact, the U.S. Department of Transportation last year designated this route for high-speed rail service, making it eligible for federal funding.

This corridor was ranked highly as a candidate for high-speed service by Amtrak and nine Midwest state departments of transportation. This collaborative program, called the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, estimated that the Chicago-Indiana-

Amtrak, as well as affected cities and counties.

OARP members should contact Sen. DeWine’s office to thank him for his support of this bill, and to encourage U.S. Senator George Voinovich (R-OH) to sign on as a co-sponsor. Also, let your Congressional representative know that this bill is in the Senate, and you want them to support it. Give personal reasons why you think faster trains are worth supporting. Don’t expect your elected officials to support trains if they don’t hear from people like you who are tired of putting up with the stresses of highways and air travel!

CINCINNATI — In a poll commissioned by a metropolitan planning organization, eight of 10 Greater Cincinnati residents said they support building the proposed light-rail line along the I-71 Corridor.

The light-rail line, which could eventually link Paramount’s Kings Island near Mason, OH, the University of Cincinnati, Xavier University, downtown Cincinnati, Covington, KY, and the Greater Cincinnati International Airport in Kentucky, is currently in the preliminary engineering phase.

The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments, a publicly funded, independent agency, commissioned the poll. More than 2,000 residents in Hamilton, Warren, Boone, and Kenton counties were surveyed.

Only 12 percent of those surveyed responded unfavorably to the light-rail proposal. This is in sharp contrast to residents of suburban Deer Park who fear a light-rail line through their community would lower property values — despite experiences to the contrary in other U.S. cities which have added light-rail lines in recent decades.

Experience has shown that light-rail lines nourish existing communities with pedestrian-oriented traffic, and encourage private investments in housing and commercial developments. On the other hand, ever-wider roads choke the life out of existing communities and push new development farther away from established neighborhoods and commercial districts.
PLEASE PATRONIZE THESE AUTHORIZED TRAVEL AGENTS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE OHIO ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS:

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Authorized Amtrak travel agents who wish to join OARP, maintain current membership status, and be listed in the TRAM DIRECTORY should send a $50 check, made payable to OARP, to:
Tom Allen, Treasurer; 610 Executive Blvd; Delaware OH 43015-1199. The TRAM annual listing fee entitles you to list your CITY, the NAME OF YOUR AGENCY, one LOCAL PHONE NUMBER, one LONG DISTANCE PHONE NUMBER, and the name of one CONTACT at the agency. Renewals will be billed by the Treasurer. Updated: Feb. 2000

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National Association of Railroad Passengers
Local meetings inform, mobilize

In January and February, members of the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (OARP) held local meetings in Columbus, Dayton, Elyria and Toledo to address issues unique to their communities. See Page Twelve for upcoming meeting dates.

The Dayton meeting was organized by Regional Coordinator Linda Leas and former OARP President Tom Pulsifer. Ohio Rail Development Commissioner Tom McOwen of Cincinnati said gaining state support for a new Cincinnati station and Ohio routes of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (Chicago to Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Toledo) would be the first step to raising awareness of rail issues with state legislators and others, Mr. McOwen said.

A problem in Ohio, Mr. McOwen added, is that there is no real service to build on or to use as an example for leaders to see. For that reason, he argued the Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati (3-C) Corridor is an extremely hard sell but can happen after there is success with other services.

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Ohio may lease Talgo trains for the Cleveland-Columbus demonstration project (see “2-C gains momentum” on Page One). These trains, built in the U.S. by the Spanish company Talgo, are in use on the Cascades corridor in the Pacific Northwest. In September, Talgo will go into service between Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

“The appeal of the sleek new green-and-white trains hinge on their comfortable ride, bistro and dining cars, and panoramic views of the coastal scenery through the large windows,” Governing magazine said in 1999 of the Cascades’ Talgo service, where ridership rose 150 percent since 1993.

**Calendar of Events/Meetings**

**March 2000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>1736 West 5th Avenue, Columbus</td>
<td>Bob Boyce 614/486-7038</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Central Union Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419/472-6357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>OARP Board Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Delaware Library</td>
<td>Delaware OH</td>
<td>Bill Hutchison 614/470-0334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>ORDC — Committee Mtg.</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center, 19th floor</td>
<td>77 South High Street, Columbus</td>
<td>ORDC office 614/644-0306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ORDC — Full Commission</td>
<td>10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center, 19th floor</td>
<td>77 South High Street, Columbus</td>
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*approximate. Full Commission meeting follow Committee Meetings

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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>OARP/NARP Region VI Meeting</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Detroit Historical Museum (Kirby &amp; Woodward Aves, Detroit)</td>
<td>Holiday Inn On the Hill, Washington D.C.</td>
<td>John DeLora 810/772-7842</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**April 2000**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Midwest Rail Advocates Conference</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Chicago Athletic Association</td>
<td>12 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago IL</td>
<td>Rick Harnish 312/409-7723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Cincinnati Local Meeting</td>
<td>8:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Tower “A”</td>
<td>Cincinnati Union Terminal</td>
<td>Mike Weber 512/891-9251</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>OARP Annual Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>To be Announced</td>
<td>Columbus</td>
<td>TBA 614 / 740-0334</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All meetings are subject to change. We firmly suggest that you confirm dates, times, and locations for all meetings.

Anyone wishing to have their meeting or event listed in this directory, please send the information to:

Ken Prendergast, Editor
12029 Clifton Boulevard #505
Lakewood OH 44107-2101
216 / 529-7677
e-mail: kjprendergast@email.msn.com.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the even-numbered months.

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**Joint OARP/NARP Region 6 Meeting**

The annual joint OARP/National Association of Railroad Passengers, Region 6 (IN, MI, and OH) meeting will be at the Detroit Historical Museum at Woodward and Kirby aves. (eight blocks south of the Amtrak station). The meeting includes lunch and a tour, and will probably last until 4:00 p.m. See “OARP meeting information” on Page Ten for more details.

For those staying overnight, we recommend the St. Regis Hotel, Woodward Ave. at W. Grand Blvd, (800) 848-4810 (weekend rate: $89). The hotel is a very short two-block walk north from the Amtrak station. There is frequent bus service on Woodward to Kirby (fare: $1.25, exact change required).

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**Registration Form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>ZIP Code</th>
<th>Phone number ( )</th>
<th>No. in party</th>
<th>Mail your registration and check or money order payable to MARP at:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NARP Region 6 Meeting c/o John DeLora 20707 Edgewood St. Clair Shores, MI 48080</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The $17.00 meeting cost also includes lunch and a tour.**

Deadline: March 20, 2000