The future has arrived!

By Ken Prendergast
Editor, Ohio Passenger Rail News

It actually happened.
A mere 37 years after Congress created Amtrak to run the nation’s passenger trains, legislators finally gave the railroad the legal and financial tools to become a more bona fide player in America’s transportation landscape. For longtime advocates of better passenger trains, it seemed as if this day might never come.

All Aboard Ohio applauded Congress’ passage of a landmark bill which could soon mean good things for long-sought rail projects in Ohio. The Congressional action is in response to five straight years of record ridership on Amtrak as high fuel prices have caused Americans to cut back on driving and airlines to reduce their roster of flights.

On Oct. 1, by a veto-proof 74-24 vote, the U.S. Senate passed House Resolution 2095, the Rail Safety Improvement Act which also included the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act. That followed a voice vote Sept. 24 by a supportive U.S. House of Representatives. President George W. Bush signed the bill.

The legislation authorizes up to $14.6 billion for rebuilding, improving and expanding passenger rail services over the next five years. Congress and the next president will still need to provide funding through the appropriations process. Of the two presidential candidates, Sen. John McCain voted against the bill; Sen. Barack Obama voted for it. In Ohio, Sen. Sherrod Brown voted for the rail legislation; Sen. George Voinovich voted against it. Since the
It's all smiles at Amtrak these days, as travelers flock to America's rails in record numbers as seen here at the newly built Wells, Maine transportation center on July 17, 2008. In Amtrak's fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, more than 28 million people got on Amtrak trains in 2008. That was the fifth year in a row of record Amtrak ridership which finally caused Congress to open the federal purse strings for more trains. By comparison, the number of Americans driving has fallen faster this year than at any time since World War II when gasoline was rationed. Surviving domestic airlines are on a glidepath to disaster as they expect to lose $12 billion in 2008 despite slashing flights and raising fares. Such events underscore some of the revolutionary changes happening in the transportation industry.

Transportation crisis, or revolution?

Rising gas prices pump up discussion on the future of transportation, cities

By Ken Prendergast
Editor, Ohio Passenger Rail News

America's transportation system is going through perhaps its greatest transformation in a half-century. This change is not only starting to affect how some of us get from place to place, but how often. It's affecting what and how much we can afford to eat. And it is causing people to question where we live, work and shop.

The evidence of this stunning and fast-moving transformation is all around us. Consider that:

Ridership on public transit nationwide is at its highest levels in 50 years, meanwhile transit systems must dramatically cut services, raise fares or both to deal with funding shortfalls. Ohio transit systems are seeing ridership increases of between 5-25 percent, yet are having to cut service and raise fares because increased revenue from growing ridership isn't keeping up with soaring diesel fuel costs.

While this is a problem nationwide, it's more severe in Ohio where state officials budgeted just $18 million in 2008 for public transit statewide. By comparison, neighboring states each provide hundreds of millions of dollars to transit annually. Numerous transit routes in Ohio are on the chopping block that would eliminate essential transportation for people to reach jobs, to get health care for Ohio's growing number of elderly residents and otherwise remove a safety net that few noticed until this year's soaring gas prices.

Ridership on Amtrak has hit record highs in each of the last five years, with another record due this year — about 28 million rides. It's proving to be a truly remark-

— See "Crisis" on page four
Ohio Passenger Rail News

Train of Thought

from Ohio Passenger Rail News Editor
Kenneth Prendergast

With apologies to all those who are hurting financially from rising gas prices, it has become apparent to me that this latest energy crisis is a necessary evil. Unfortunately, it often takes a crisis to get our elected officials to take action. Finally they are acting on making our economy less dependent on petroleum. And in no other sector is our economy more dependent on petroleum than the transportation sector.

Once upon a time, back when I first got involved in passenger rail advocacy in the early 1980s, I heard a wise old man make a carved-in-marble prediction. I don’t remember his name, but he said this country will never invest in railroads unless there’s a long-lasting oil crisis.

Based on the events of recent years, and especially the last year, he may be right.

Yes, I realize California has evolved its passenger rail system over the past 30 years with more than $3 billion in public funds. Yep, I’m aware that the federal government enhanced an already strong Northeast Corridor. And, yeah, I realize other states have been upgrading their state-supported trains, stations and tracks piece by piece and expanding their public constituencies to accomplish even greater things.

Despite its historic passage of pro-Amtrak legislation, Congress still has much work to do to bless passenger rail with funding comparable to that which is enjoyed by highways, aviation, mass transit and waterways. Nor have we seen Ohio’s elected leaders open the state’s purse strings yet for rail and transit as other states have done.

Yet few things kick a constituency in the back pocket more than a pocketbook issue. The upward trend in gas prices over the past few years seems to have awakened the public. The transportation game has changed dramatically.

Elected officials who once spoke politely about passenger trains and transit are suddenly speaking passionately for them. Citizens, who in the past questioned the need for more trains and transit, have done the math of their own finances again and now see how having an alternative to driving helps.

Those are all great things to have happen, and unfortunately it has taken an increasingly deeper energy crisis to achieve them.

I have witnessed the change in my own neighborhood, a densely populated, walkable area called the Gold Coast west of downtown Cleveland. Never before have I seen so many people jammed onto the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority’s buses and trains. I have also never seen so many pedestrians and cyclists out and about before. I was part of that change as I happily relinquished my car for much of the
The Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers (dba All Aboard Ohio) is incorporated in Ohio as a non-profit association and exempt from federal income tax under the IRS Code, Section 501(c)(3) as a publicly supported educational organization. Dues and donations may be tax-deductible in accordance with the IRS Code.

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Presidential comparisons

As a nonprofit educational organization, All Aboard Ohio is not allowed to endorse candidates for any elected political offices. However we are able to present, side-by-side, candidates’ policy positions on the issues of railroads, Amtrak and public transportation. Considering the importance of the presidential election on Nov. 4 on the future of transportation, as well as economic and environmental sustainability in America, All Aboard Ohio presents the following policy statements by the two major candidates:

John McCain (Republican)

No transportation policy statements from Sen. McCain other than the following could be located. The following is from a policy paper “The Nation Cannot Reduce Its Dependency on Oil Unless We Change How We Power Our Transportation Sector” which is available at Sen. McCain’s campaign Web site:

- Automaker tax credits - Sen. McCain wants to issue a “Clean Car Challenge” to Detroit with a $5,000 tax credit for each customer who buys a zero-emission car. The idea is to start a race between automakers to put new technology on the road.
- A battery-technology prize - A McCain administration would award $300 million to whoever develops a battery that leapfrogs everything we’ve got in terms of size, capacity, cost and power.
- Flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs) - U.S. automakers have committed to making 50 percent of their cars capable of burning gasoline, ethanol and other fuels by 2012, but Sen. McCain wants them to move faster. He cites Brazil as a model.
- Expand alcohol-based fuels and eliminate tariffs - Sen. McCain says alcohol-based fuels offer greater promise but subsidies and mandates focusing solely on corn-based ethanol are short-sighted and must be eliminated.
- Enforce CAFE Standards - Sen. McCain’s campaign Web site which offers these points:
  - Strengthen infrastructure - Sen. Obama acknowledges our nation’s railroads, highways, bridges, airports and city streets are a mess and says “strengthening the transportation system” is a top priority.
  - Support Amtrak - Sen. Obama supported the Passenger Rail Investment and Innovation Act, which promised a long-term financial commitment to Amtrak, but says the railroad needs reform.
  - Support freight railroads and high-speed passenger rail - Providing passengers with safe high-speed rail will have significant environmental and metropolitan planning advantages and help diversify our nation’s transportation infrastructure. Domestic rail freight capacity must also be strengthened because our demand for rail transportation has never been greater, leaving many key transportation hubs stretched to capacity.
  - Ease congestion - Sen. Obama’s game plan is to empower the states by requiring them to roll out more bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly roads and giving them the money to do it.
  - Improve transportation access to jobs - Three-quarters of welfare recipients live in areas that are poorly served by public transportation and low-income workers spend up to 36 percent of their incomes on transportation.
  - Overhaul the nation’s air transport system - Sen. Obama’s plan includes 

Barack Obama (Democrat)

The following is from a policy paper titled “Investing in 21st Century Transportation” from Sen. Obama’s campaign Web site which offers these points:

- Strengthen infrastructure - Sen. Obama acknowledges our nation’s railroads, highways, bridges, airports and city streets are a mess and says “strengthening the transportation system” is a top priority.
- Support Amtrak - Sen. Obama supported the Passenger Rail Investment and Innovation Act, which promised a long-term financial commitment to Amtrak, but says the railroad needs reform.
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- Overhaul the nation’s air transport system - Sen. Obama’s plan includes 

The future has arrived!

"Future" from page one — limping along from one budget survival fight to the next, it is now on a path to receive federal funding necessary to address deferred maintenance, acquire new trains and invest in tracks, signals, bridges and stations to expand services.”

He noted that long-sought plans to develop passenger train service on existing tracks at 79 mph linking Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati (3-C Corridor) are eligible to receive federal funds through HR 2095. At Gov. Ted Strickland’s request, the Ohio Rail Development Commission and Amtrak are preparing a plan due in late 2009 to implement two-daily round-trip trains in the 3-C Corridor. Under HR 2095, 80 percent of startup costs associated with 3-C Corridor rail service may be funded by the federal government. The remainder would come from state, local and/or private sources.

The implementation plan is being paid for by $500,000 in federal transportation planning funds administered by the Ohio Department of Transportation. Additional 3-C Corridor planning funds, totaling $62,500, were awarded Sept. 30 to ORDC by the Federal Railroad Administration.

“Very good,” Mr. Bremer said. “Introductory train service in the 3-C Corridor is a logical starting point for the proposed six-route Ohio Hub rail system which would offer fast trains in our populous five-state region. The 3-C Corridor is the busiest travel market in this region and therefore the centerpiece of the planned rail system.”

Furthermore, Amtrak, the ORDC and local governments will now have the resources to improve Amtrak train stations in their communities. Ohio has seven Amtrak stations (Alliance, Bryan, Columbus, Delaware, Findlay, Toledo and Westfield) that would receive $2.5 million in federal funds to upgrade their facilities to accommodate the trains. Local funds would be needed to complete the projects.

The money is the result of President George W. Bush's $800 million Transportation Investment in Economic Recovery and Infrastructure (TIER) program. The federal government has also committed $87 million to Amtrak's national fleet modernization plan.
The Executive Director Report

Building partnerships with other like-minded organizations

By Andrew Bremer

Executive Director, All Aboard Ohio

Numerous activities have been progressing since the Spring issue of the full Ohio Passenger Rail News.

Among fundraising activity, the Fall fundraiser will again be held in Lorain in the evening of Thursday, Nov. 13. Save-the-date post cards will be in the mail by Sept. 26. This event will build awareness and funds for promoting the West Shore Corridor commuter rail project. The venue – the Black River Landing Transportation Center – was donated to us by the Lorain Port Authority. Wine tasting and light food also were donated.

Preliminary discussions have indicated that the event will begin early for special VIP, and generous donors to discuss the importance of commuter rail and about the funds being assembled to move the project forward.

Our membership building activities continue, albeit with a short break following the Legislative Summit and Annual Meeting. As of Sept. 6, we have 5,600 packets left to mail out for the remainder of 2008. So far, we have gathered 100 new members from this program while the majority of these packets have yet to go out. Paul Gluck from consulting firm CH2M Hill and Jack Shaner from the Ohio Environmental Council offered to donate their offices with their expanded phone capabilities for volunteers and members to make follow-up phone calls.

This program will lead to greater numbers in our membership rolls and we will use our increased strength in conjunction with our coalition partners to ensure that rail plays a significant part of any future transportation policies. Some of our work with our coalition partners is mentioned below.

A broad, statewide alliance called the Transportation Matters Coalition was created to promote awareness and coverage of transportation issues in Ohio. This organization is still determining if it will focus on funding our transportation status quo or will they seek to seek funding for the right solutions.

Another coalition partner is the Environmental Ohio Conference in which we can press environmental concerns and how better transportation options and community design may help. My feelings are that many in the environmental community are focused on big solution items rather than looking at the basics of our development and transportation systems.

Yet another partner is the T4America Campaign – a national effort to organize many state organizations to push for national transportation reform. All Aboard Ohio is a member of this coalition.

The Ohio Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) recently released two reports by the National PIRG "Squandering the Stimulus" and "A Better Way to Go - Meeting America's 21st Century Transportation Challenges with Modern Public Transit." With the momentum from the release of these reports, Ohio PIRG started a campaign to prepare elected officials and other organizations on the need to invest in clean, efficient transportation options for all Ohioans, fix crumbling roads and bridges and spend taxpayers’ money more wisely by having investment directly tied to outcomes.

All Aboard Ohio will manage this campaign and reach out to as many coalition members as possible. Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson and Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman have signed on recently.

The Sierra Club of Ohio and All Aboard Ohio have begun preliminary discussions to more closely tie transportation options, especially rail, to environmental stewardship and how our two organizations may partner in the future.

And another partner is the Restoring Our Prosperity Policy Summit, a joint effort by Greater Ohio and the Brookings Institution. More than 1,000 participants were addressed by the Brookings Institution, Greater Ohio and other organizations at the recent summit to help determine the best course of action for implementing recommended policies for restoring prosperity to Ohio. Among the recommendations (and no surprise to us) include increased investment in high-speed passenger rail and the rediscovery of dense, walkable and recognizable cities that younger generations of Ohioans are looking for when determining a place to live. Employers will also look for these amenities as well.

All in all, I will be looking toward 2009 where we will take our message of safe, efficient, affordable transportation solutions on the road to most, if not all, of the station stops proposed for the Ohio Hub Plan. While we don't have trains running on the tracks just yet, we have succeeded in framing our argument for investment in rail for better options for all of Ohio.
**ODOT task force ideas take shape**

A task force charged with looking at new ways for the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to do business is finalizing its recommendations. All Aboard Ohio is one of the 63 members of this task force. While there is still much work for the task force to do, some things were clear before the process began in May.

What is known is that Ohio cannot continue to do business as it has for the past 50 years, in which highways have received nearly all of the attention of policymakers while other modes like public transit and railroads have been neglected. Putting all of Ohio’s transportation eggs in one basket has put enormous stress on the state’s massive and aging highway system which the gas tax is no longer able to adequately fund. As a result, additional stress is being placed on the state’s economy, its cities and Ohio’s natural environment.

There are three task force committees:
- Multi-Modal Transportation System, which has subcommittees for moving people and move freight (All Aboard Ohio, through Northeast Ohio board member Ken Sisak, is serving on the moving people subcommittee);
- Generating Economic Development; and
- Maximizing Public Investment.

The multi-modal committee recognizes the full merits of the highway transportation system, but also acknowledges that near total dependence on this system has created negative consequences. Traffic congestion, pollution and over-reliance on petroleum are among those costs. A passage in the committee’s draft report says it all:

> With the creation of Ohio’s 21st Century Transportation Priorities Task Force, Governor (Ted) Strickland and ODOT Director (James) Beasley have recognized that we cannot live or prosper as a nation, or as individuals, without a transportation system that provides outstanding mobility for all. We simply need more choices and diversity. If we are not to suffer from the negative consequences of the highway system, we shall have to work together and as a nation to create new modes of travel.

Ohio should work cooperatively with the freight railroads and Amtrak to improve reliability and on-time performance of existing trains operating through the state. When it comes to rail service expansion, the report advocates the state adopt an “incremental approach to the development of the Ohio Hub Plan.” That means taking on this large plan in bite-size pieces. First steps should be to initiate service in the Cleveland - Columbus - Cincinnati (3-C) Corridor.

These are the best and worst of times for public transit. Ridership on the nation’s buses and trains hasn’t been as high as it is now since Dwight Eisenhower was in the White House and the Interstate Highway System was only on the drawing board. This increasingly common scene was photographed July 2, 2008 on board a Transit Authority of River City express bus coming into downtown Louisville from the suburbs. Although high gas prices have blessed public transit with new ridership, it has also cursed it with diesel fuel costs that have risen 116 percent in the past two years. Fare increases, service cuts or both have hit two-thirds of the nation’s transit systems causing citizens to demand solutions to what has become an increasingly acute nationwide transportation crisis.

With the increasing costs of operating gas stations, public authorities to implement and oversee a variety of toll roads.

> The consideration of design/build partnerships.
> Exploration of the vehicle-miles traveled technologies as funding strategies.
> Consideration of raising the gas tax and indexing it to inflation.
> Creation of Transportation Improvement Districts for jurisdictions considering large-scale transportation projects.
Transportation crisis, or revolution?

"Crisis" from page one

“Crisis” from page one

able year with ridership and revenue up 11 and 14 percent, respectively. That prompted both houses of Congress to finally vote a funding boost — a five-year, $15 billion passenger rail program for the nation. Only one-fifth of the funding would be for Amtrak operating costs. The rest would be for capital improvements and expansion. Final approval of this and bill will likely portend good things for expansion of Ohio Amtrak service, including new service between Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati. More details will follow in the next newsletter.

Two years ago, American freight railroads hauled more freight tonnage than at any time in their 170-year history. Last year was their second-best year. Despite the slowing economy, freight railroads continued to rack up impressive financial statistics this year. As oil prices rose, so did the stock prices of the nation’s four largest railroads while trucking firms shifted intermodal shipments to rail. Union Pacific, BNSF, Norfolk Southern and CSX all hit stock price highs this past summer.

U.S. railroads are, in total, making $5 billion worth of investments this year in new locomotives, freight cars, tracks, signals, bridges and buildings. But that’s half of what they need to do keep up with freight traffic growth and avoid a “traffic meltdown,” according to railroad industry officials quoted in the Chicago Tribune and National Public Radio this summer.

The federal highway trust fund, which is financed by gasoline taxes and pays for road and transit construction and maintenance projects, will run out of money for the first time ever this month. At first, the Bush Administration sought to divert $2 billion from public transit to shore up the highway fund. Instead, a temporary cash infusion of $8 billion from the U.S. Treasury will likely be used to keep the fund solvent. But it is only a temporary solution. Unless a new way of funding it is found, the HTF could be $22 billion in the red in just three years.

Then there’s commercial aviation, which was on a steep descent even before the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. But since the start of the year, the industry has gone into a nosedive. Airlines are projected to lose nearly $13 billion by the end of the year, eclipsing a record loss of $11 billion in 2002. Airlines have laid-off thousands of workers, grounded hundreds of planes and announced dozens of fare increases. That doesn’t include extra fees for everything from checking baggage to getting a print-out of your ticket (Delta charges $50 to customers who still want a physical copy of their ticket).

Since the start of the year, 25 airlines have declared bankruptcy or folded, 100 communities have lost all airline service and every airport has seen its roster of flights cut. The nationwide average is a 10 percent cut but some airports, including in Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, saw one out of every four flights eliminated. At Cleveland, a planned 40 percent increase in the number of Continental Airlines flights was axed.

For more than 50 years, America’s rampant urban sprawl has been fueled by cheap gasoline and a near-unwavering demand for new homes (rather than rebuild existing homes). Some, including Eduardo Peñalver, a professor of property and land-use law at Cornell University, said rising gas prices were the pin that pricked the housing bubble and a major factor in the foreclosure crisis.

When combined, the sub-prime mortgage mess and the price of gas may conspire to end, if not reverse decades of urban sprawl, some predict. Nearly every metro area with decent transit service in the past year has seen property values fall in the exurbs and rise in the core city.

But the impact on Ohio cities has been less clear, given the general lack of transit services and walkable neighborhoods. In Ohio’s most transit-oriented metro area, Greater Cleveland where half of Ohio’s transit ridership...
Federal ‘stars lining up for change’

One of the nation’s most respected public transportation policy experts sees change in the stars. And there are a lot of stars - the gas tax funding crisis, energy security, highway and airport congestion, aging infrastructure, aging population, climate change and international competitiveness.

“The stars are lining up for change,” said Donald Emerson, principal consultant at the global transportation and engineering firm Parsons Brinckerhoff. He was the guest speaker at All Aboard Ohio’s West Shore Corridor Stakeholders meeting held April 23 at Westlake City Hall. All Aboard Ohio thanks PB for flying Mr. Emerson in from San Francisco so Ohio policymakers could hear his presentation.

Change could come as early as this time next year. The federal surface transportation funding law, the framework for which is reauthorized every six years, must be renewed by Sept. 30, 2009. How sweeping the change will be depends whose prescription is followed, said Mr. Emerson. He ought to know. He was chief of the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) Analysis Division and helped create criteria for the FTA’s New Starts program which funds new rail and bus rapid transit projects. Today, he chairs the American Public Transportation Association’s Policy and Planning Committee and is a member of APTA’s federal surface transportation program reauthorization task force.

The first six-year federal transportation law was passed in 1991 with the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA - dubbed “ice tea”). It was a landmark law which allowed state and local governments unprecedented flexibility in the spending of federal gas taxes, which previously went almost entirely to highways.

“The next couple of years could offer some of the most dramatic changes to surface transportation policy since the 1991 ISTEA, and possibly the 1956 Federal Interstate and Defense Highways Act,” Mr. Emerson said.

When the last federal surface transportation law was passed nearly six years ago, some of the threats to the viability of current transportation policy could be seen at

»That urban transit and rail is in the national interest (not just a local or state interest);
»A fuel tax increase is needed;
»The current federal program should be restructured into 10 mode-neutral programs, including a new Metropolitan Mobility Program;
»Funds should be apportioned based on system performance.

The Metropolitan Mobility Program could be a block grant program in which federal funds are given to existing metropolitan planning organizations based on a formula. Other than that there might be few strings attached on how these federal funds could be spent by local officials.

There was also a “minority report” issued by U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters and two others representing the Bush Administration. In it, they recommended:

»More public-private partnerships to fund and manage transportation infrastructure;
»Road pricing rather than fuel tax increase;
»Public transit and rail shouldn’t be considered in the national interest.

Prior to issuing the minority report, Secretary Peters unilaterally and substantially reduced rail’s prominence in the majority report. The deletions were, of course, discovered by the other commission members and the rail investment references were restored prior to the report’s release. Thus, the anti-rail commission members issued their own report.

“Industry and interest groups are developing recom-
simplified and streamlined discretionary program.

The last is to “blow it up and start over,” said Mr. Emerson. He believed this option is gaining favor, and could become a formula-allocated program, or be carried out similar to the Interstate highways model in

**Ohioans are rediscovering their cities as places to live “low-mileage lifestyles” where driving everywhere isn't required. Such lifestyles are enabled by pedestrian-friendly, transit-accessible neighborhoods like this one around Findlay Market in Cincinnati. This is also the proposed northern endpoint for the downtown streetcar line.**
People are waiting to get on board a downtown Cleveland-bound Green Line train at Green Road in Shaker Heights. Ohioans are getting on board trains and transit, but more state and federal elected officials in Ohio need to follow them there. The evidence is a lack of state and federal funding for trains and transit. In 2008 Ohio committed just $18 million in state funds for transit and $3 million for railroads. Fortunately, change is happening. Strong support by Congress resulted in passage of legislation allowing for a doubling in federal funding for passenger rail. That includes a federal-state capital investment partnership for passenger rail—the first in U.S. history. And Gov. Ted Strickland became Ohio's first governor to ask Amtrak to develop a plan for implementing intercity passenger rail service in Ohio's 3-C (Cleveland - Columbus - Dayton - Cincinnati) Corridor. That plan should be complete in late-2009 and will be eligible to receive federal funds.
All Aboard Ohio’s President
Opportunity and Challenge

By Bill Hutchison
President, All Aboard Ohio

Newsletter Editor Ken Prendergast points out in his article, “America’s transportation system is going through perhaps its greatest transformation in a half-century.” How true. We are all feeling the pinch in so many ways and not just at the gas pump.

Amtrak and transit providers are experiencing record ridership. Yet Amtrak can’t expand while, ironically, transit customers are faced with service cuts due to high energy costs. At the same time, important legislation to better fund passenger rail and transit has yet to be passed into law. Some legislation has even been blocked by oil industry-friendly lawmakers – Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma) to name one.

High gas prices and high ridership present us with the opportunity to make our case. People intuitively sense that the current system really isn’t a system at all and that it isn’t working. Furthermore, many also realize that the current auto- and air-dominated policies that have been in place for decades are not meeting today’s needs.

Public awareness of transportation issues is far ahead of many political leaders, some of whom are only now becoming interested in real solutions. Indeed, there are still some who continue to actively work against any sort of transportation reform. Somehow, we must find a way to push forward. That is our challenge.

We know our cause is right and just. We know our country will benefit from having real transportation choices. How do we make that happen?

For starters, it all begins with you. Take time from your activities and become engaged. Call, write or email your legislators and tell them you want the freedom to travel any way you want. Tell them that you want more and better rail and transit service.

Contact the All Aboard Ohio office (614-228-6005 or andrew@allaboardohio.org) and ask what you can do to help. I’d bet Executive Director Andrew Bremer could find something for you to do! This is especially true of members in the Columbus area.

Also, give what you can to help All Aboard Ohio work for our cause. It all boils down to money: the more you give, the more we can do. It’s that simple. We also need more members and I want each of you to commit to bring in at least one new member this year.

All Aboard Ohio is already a national and state leader when it comes to rail, transit and transportation reform issues. We continue to be the only statewide organization with these issues as our main focus.

Our Board of Directors is taking a lead role and has passed a resolution supporting HR 2095, which would dedicate up to $15 billion to intercity rail passenger service over the next five years. We conceived and are pushing the West Shore Corridor proposal for improved public transit from Cleveland into the populous, western lakeshore communities. Our annual Legislative Summit has been a real success.

We are looked at as an innovator and a leading advocacy organization here and nationally and yet there is so much more to do. We want to build on past successes and become even more effective at making our goals a reality. We must increase our outreach to legislators, community leaders, business people and like-minded groups to become a force to be reckoned with.

In the coming months, this organization must ramp up its legislative contacts. We must become much more outspoken about our issues and not be shy about asking for more. I will insist that we do this.

Friends, this is a national security issue. Energy-efficient trains and public transit is key to reducing our dependence on foreign oil and reducing global warming. Too many of our leaders are late to recognize this fact, while we continue to support people who don’t like us by continuing to buy their oil.

This is unhealthy for our country. Oilman T. Boone Pickens tells us we are witnessing the biggest transfer of wealth in human history to support our addiction to oil. By overemphasizing the two least energy-efficient modes of transportation – highway and air – we have made ourselves far more vulnerable to fuel price swings than other nations which have invested in rail, transit and walkable communities. We must change.

It’s high time we put a stop to that and get real choices. That’s our challenge.

West Shore Corridor update

By Ken Prendergast
West Shore Corridor Project Manager

Securing funding has been the primary activity in recent months for All Aboard Ohio’s West Shore Corridor campaign. Funding is being secured for two purposes - planning and promotion - and by different entities.

Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) have assisted Lorain County officials in making both requests. Additional local funding will be needed to meet a goal of $500,000 to carry out this stage of planning work.

This approach to planning for transit investments in the West Shore Corridor is recognized by transportation planning entities at all levels of government as the standard approach. The association’s endorsement of seeking West Shore Corridor planning via the NEPA process echoed those of numerous other entities which passed resolutions supporting seeking federal funds for an alternatives analysis.

Endorsements came from the Lorain County Commissioners, Lorain Port Authority, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority plus city councils in Cleveland, Lakewood, Westlake, Avon Lake, Avon, Sheffield Lake, Lorain and Vermilion. The Ohio Rail Development Commission's board also put their support behind the effort.

Four county leaders from Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit and Medina counties are backing the West Shore Corridor planning effort.

It is hoped that this funding will help make the West Shore Corridor a viable future transit option along one of America’s most beautiful coastlines.
All Aboard Ohio is securing funding to promote improved and expanded public transit services in the West Shore Corridor from downtown Cleveland west into the lakeshore communities in Cuyahoga, Lorain and Erie counties. In the last six months, we have secured grants and donations for more than $40,000 for the West Shore Corridor Campaign. The two most recent commitments are $7,500 each from the Nord Family Foundation in Lorain County and the City of Cleveland. We’re hoping for more support at the Lorain Fundraiser to be held the evening of Nov. 13 at the Black River Transportation Center in downtown Lorain. Look for details in the mail.

Funding is also being sought for planning. As previously reported, U.S. Rep. Betty Sutton (D-13 of Copley) secured a federal appropriation for $344,000 for an alternatives analysis of the West Shore Corridor. Lorain County Commissioners made that request, but will still require that they submit a funding application to the Federal Transit Administration.

As part of that application, a non-federal funding share of at least 20 percent is needed. Thus, Lorain County officials are seeking $80,000 from the Ohio Department of Development. This funding could be awarded as early as this fall. Staff at All Aboard Ohio, Lorain Port Authority and the Greater Cleveland

the West Shore Corridor is recognized by transportation planning entities at all levels of government as the standard format. Typically called the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, it requires that new-capacity transportation projects take these progressive steps: feasibility study, alternatives analysis, environmental impact analysis, preliminary engineering and final engineering/construction. Any two of those contiguous steps may be undertaken as a single planning step.

To deviate from the NEPA process negates any chance of securing federal funds for any aspect of the project. In a 2000 study, adding commuter rail the West Shore Corridor was rated “potentially feasible” as an appropriate use of federal transit funding. That was when gas prices were $1.20 per gallon.

Price spikes since then would certainly cause commuter rail ridership to increase above the earlier estimates and increase the project’s federal rating. Also, the 2000 study didn’t account for using lower-cost rail transit options in the West Shore Corridor, such as self-propelled rail cars. Such cars could include new hybrid electric/diesel trains that might operate over GCRTA’s Red Line into Tower City and vastly reduce startup/operating costs compared to diesel locomotive-hauled trains that were studied in 2000.

All Aboard Ohio’s board of directors voted unanimously on Aug. 2 to support advocating this planning

Among the alternatives that need to be analyzed for the West Shore Corridor is the type of train equipment to use. In addition to locomotive-hauled trains, upcoming planning should look at self-propelled rail cars like those used by New Jersey Transit for its Trenton-Camden River Line (shown at Trenton). These trains can be diesel, electric or both, with the latter two capable of operating into Cleveland’s existing Tower City Center station.

Consider that we’re awaiting decisions on grant applications to the Toledo Community Foundation, Whirlpool Corp. Foundation; Cyrus Eaton Foundation, Merle and Peg Hamilton Foundation and Columbus Foundation. We’re also talking with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to see where we might fit within their programming guidelines.

Fundraising events also continue, such as the Lorain Wine Tasting and Silent Auction on Nov. 13 at the Black River Landing Transportation Center. Membership building is another key part of fundraising. That includes continuing our “Get On Board” new-membership campaign mailings with the “Ringing for Rails” follow-up phone calls. These activities took place in September and October in the Cleveland and Columbus areas. In November and December, we will target Youngstown, Akron, Toledo, Dayton and Springfield.

Planned fundraising activities are a “Major Donors” campaign, corporate partnerships for all 2009 activities and starting conversations with private corporation foundations. Other possibilities for 2009 may involve a canvassing campaign door-to-door in the spring and a golf outing.

For more information on how to help All Aboard Ohio meet its fundraising challenges, please contact the association’s Columbus office at (614) 228-6005.
Directory of All Aboard Ohio

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Directory updated: October, 2008

Thank-you, All Aboard Ohio supporters!

Below are some of the foundations, corporations, non-profit organizations, and labor unions that support All Aboard Ohio...
Thank-you, All Aboard Ohio supporters!

Below are some of the foundations, corporations, non-profit organizations, and labor unions that support All Aboard Ohio activities. The support of our corporate sponsors, and of our dues-paying members, allows us to work “for improved passenger train and transit services in Ohio.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundations</th>
<th>Corporate Sponsors</th>
<th>Non-profit Organizations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Dayton Foundation</td>
<td>TranSystems</td>
<td>APTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>The George Gund Foundation</td>
<td>HDR</td>
<td>AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Stocker Foundation</td>
<td>DMJM Harris</td>
<td>American Public Transit Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 25 Years of Giving</td>
<td>AECOM</td>
<td>Ohio VOTES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Give Smart!**

Let us help you plan your charitable giving to assist All Aboard Ohio in bringing improved passenger rail service to Ohio while maximizing your tax benefits.

- Gifts of Cash, stocks and bonds and other property
- Charitable gift annuities
- Trusts
- Bequests

For more information about “Give Smart” please contact the All Aboard Ohio office at (614) 228-6005.

Labor Unions

- Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division
- Transport Workers Union of America
Don’t be caught in the cold this season.
Visit our online merchandise, store and support our efforts!
www.cafepress.com/allaboardohio

All Aboard Ohio election reforms

At All Aboard Ohio’s Fall Meeting on Saturday, Nov. 8 in Elyria, a constitutional reform package will be submitted to the membership for consideration and possible ratification. For meeting registration details and location, please see the meeting announcement below.

The proposed reform package was developed by the All Aboard Ohio Board of Directors and includes these recommended changes:

- Clarification of Article VI, spelling out whether a candidate for one office, who is running for another office can retain their original seat after an election.
- Addition of three new Board seats in addition to the 12 we have at present, including officers.
- Elections: Two-year terms, with all posts up for election every other even year, starting in 2008, instead of having staggered terms as at present.
- Other items include cleaning up language and going to a gender-neutral format.

The proposed changes will be reviewed and described in detail at the meeting. We will have handouts and hope to have a PowerPoint presentation to fully discuss these possible changes.

Registration Form
All Aboard Ohio Fall Membership Meeting
9:30 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 8, 2008
Moss’ Prime Rib and Spaghetti House
525 Broad Street

Join All Aboard Ohio on a tour of Elyria’s historic train station!

Attendees at All Aboard Ohio’s Fall membership meeting, Nov. 8, will tour Elyria’s former New York Central train depot, now being rehabilitated.

The depot, used by rail passengers prior to 1958, was sold by New York Central. Over time it was a lumberyard, a cosmetology school and later sat vacant. It was near to becoming a rehabilitation center. But the Lorain County Commissioners bought the station in December 2000 for the purpose of turning it into an intermodal transportation hub to serve Amtrak, Greyhound and Lorain County Transit (LCT) passengers as well as retail shops and an office for LCT.

Lorain County Special Projects Director Karen Davis will talk about the depot’s rehabilitation efforts and the depot’s future as envisioned by the county.

Elyria’s former New York Central train depot, built in 1925, features an ornate rotunda and a windowed copper cupola at the center of a vaulted ceiling. For years a dropped ceiling kept the station’s impressive dome and ceiling from the public’s view.
Registration Form
All Aboard Ohio Fall Membership Meeting
9:30 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 8, 2008
Moss' Prime Rib and Spaghetti House
525 Broad Street
Elyria, OH

Name: ____________________________
Address: _________________________
City: ___________________ State: ______ ZIP: ______
Phone: (____)______
Email: ____________________________

Please register me for the All Aboard Ohio Fall Membership Meeting
$30 All Aboard Ohio members
$55 Non-members, includes one year membership

Registration deadline, November 3, 2008

photocopy form and mail with check or money order to:
All Aboard Ohio Fall Meeting
309 South 4th St, Suite 304
Columbus, OH 43215-5428

Parking: On-street (angled) parking is available on Broad St. near Moss' and on Court St. a half-block east of Moss'. There is free off-street parking in the Elyria City Hall parking lot (enter off of Second St., which is one block south of Moss'). Court and Second streets are one-way streets (see map at right). Do not use the First Merit Bank lots as they have reserved parking spaces.

Calendar of Events/Meetings

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

November 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>All Aboard Ohio Annual Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Moss' Prime Rib &amp; Spaghetti House, 525 Broad Street, Elyria</td>
<td>All Aboard Ohio 614 / 228-6005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ohio Rail Development Comm.</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Riffe Center, 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor, South B&amp;C, Columbus</td>
<td>ORDC 614 / 728-9497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>West Shore Corridor Fundraiser</td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Black River Landing Transportation Center, Lorain</td>
<td>All Aboard Ohio 614 / 228-6005</td>
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</table>

December 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station MLK (Central Union) Plaza, Toledo</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>