Ohio Passenger Rail Assessment of Needs

February 2017

A White Paper of All Aboard Ohio!
BACKGROUND

Passenger rail service continues to be a growth industry in much of the world, including in the United States. Amtrak now covers 94 percent of its costs through revenues and the railroad broke another ridership record in Fiscal Year 2016. Amtrak ridership has grown 50 percent since 2000.

One look at the first section of this report that summarizes our neighbors' stunning progress should prove sobering in light of Ohio's relative inaction. Ohioans deserve better. Ohio is the nation's seventh-most populous state and its population density (Ohio, 284 persons per square mile) ranks with France (295 persons per square mile). France, of course, is home to an extensive passenger rail system a small portion of which includes the high-speed TGV network. Yet Ohio's travel options are very limited, slow and expensive even by U.S. standards.

All Aboard Ohio, a statewide nonprofit association of more than 500 citizens and business founded in 1973, is committed to encouraging improvements to passenger rail and public transportation in and through the state of Ohio. Thus, we prepared this report to familiarize Ohio Gov. John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly with the following contents:

- **Rail Neighbors**: Ohio's neighbor states and Ontario have undertaken or are pursuing many millions if not billions of dollars worth of improvements to their passenger rail networks.
- **Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs**: We took inventory of passenger rail projects being pursued in Ohio that could see construction as a result of funding from the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) next budget.
- **Ohio's Future Rail Needs/Concepts**: There are also long-term rail improvements around Ohio that were considered by various public jurisdictions and railroads in recent years and may require new funding to achieve.
- **Ohio Public Policy Recommendations**: All Aboard Ohio also offered policy recommendations that Gov. John Kasich and Ohio General Assembly could consider during its ODOT budget deliberations in order to better facilitate passenger rail and public transportation improvements in the next two years.

We look forward to continuing our dialogue with Ohio's policymakers in achieving realistic, near-term improvements to our state's transportation system.

Note: Ohio “Rail Neighbor” data on the following pages is from each state's department of transportation and Amtrak.

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2 Rail advocates: 'Coalition' a must for bringing more passenger rail to Cincy, WCPO, Sept. 26, 2016.


Summary – Illinois has invested more than $2 billion in passenger rail statewide since 2000:
• Amtrak operates 56 passenger trains per day in and through Illinois.
• Serves 4.6 million riders at Illinois stations.
• Of the 56 trains, Illinois Department of Transportation (DOT) sponsored 30 daily trains at $38.3 million in 2016 that provided service in four regional corridors, with 2 million annual riders.
• More than 284,000 Illinois residents are members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards frequent user program.

Illinois DOT/Amtrak Corridors:
• Chicago-Milwaukee (jointly supported with Wisconsin): 8 daily round trips
• Chicago-St. Louis: 5 daily round trips
• Chicago-Quincy: 2-4 daily round trips
• Chicago-Carbondale: 3 daily round trips

St. Louis-Chicago High Speed Rail (HSR) Project is a state-sponsored effort to upgrade the existing railroad corridor between Chicago and St. Louis to accommodate passenger train speeds of up to 110 mph:
• The project includes reconstruction of main track, new and rebuilt sidings, grade crossing improvements, new fencing, new and rebuilt structures, upgraded stations and installation of Positive Train Control interactive signals.
• Construction activities along the corridor began in 2010 and are scheduled to be largely complete in 2017 (some activities continuing into 2018).

Benefits of the HSR project include:
• Overall travel time between Chicago & St. Louis was reduced by 1 hour.
• New passenger cars and high efficiency diesel locomotives to begin delivery in 2017.
• On time performance at 85% and above, compared to the previous 75%.
• Four-quadrant gates, fencing and other improvements significantly improves safety at crossings.
• Overall investment is $1.89 billion, of which $1.6 billion consists of federal funds (primarily High-Speed & Intercity Passenger Rail program).
• Amtrak purchased more than $243 million worth of goods and services in Illinois in 2016.
• 1,415 residents were employed by Amtrak in 2016 with wages totaling $103 million.
Illinois DOT passenger rail expansion projects:
- Chicago-Quad Cities development underway, with twice-daily service each way to start in 2017 (using $177 million in federal funds matched by $45 million in state general funds).
- Planning underway for Chicago Union Station improved passenger rail facilities & supportive real estate development (with 950-foot office tower) totaling $1 billion.
- Quad Cities-Danville feasibility study (Amtrak study underway).
- More Chicago-Champaign round trips (Amtrak study underway).

CREATE “Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency”:
- 70 related projects, including rail-rail and highway-rail grade crossing separations (see photo below).
- $3.8 billion infrastructure program.
- $1.2 billion committed to date.
- Main goals:
  – Reduce rail and road congestion
  – Improve quality of life and motorist safety
  – Improve economic competitiveness

**Rail neighbor: INDIANA**

**Summary – the Hoosier State innovated public-private passenger rail with great results:**

- Public-private Indianapolis-Lafayette-Chicago service called the *Hoosier State* started, running four trains per week with Amtrak’s *Cardinal* providing service on the same route the other three days.
- Indiana DOT first funded the *Hoosier State* in September 2013, finalized long-term agreements with Amtrak and Iowa Pacific Holdings (IPH) and transitioned the service on August 1, 2015.
- INDOT’s cost is capped at $3,054,331 per fiscal year.
- Local government partners contributed $245,331 in the first year and $351,960 in year two.
- INDOT has a full-time passenger rail contract manager and a mechanical consultant.
- INDOT has retained a consultant to identify track infrastructure and signaling improvements to increase the speed and frequency of the *Hoosier State* service and seek federal construction grants.

**Benefits:**

- *Hoosier State* ridership is up 46% in one year (2015 vs 2016).
- Ticket revenue is up 64% in the same period.
- Customer surveys show 90% were “very satisfied” with the *Hoosier State* service.
- INDOT seeking contractor to identify track and signaling improvements to increase the speed and frequency of the *Hoosier State* train.
- Amtrak operates 15 daily trains in and through Indiana, and purchased $23.8 million of goods and services in Indiana in 2016.
- Amtrak also employed 757 Indiana residents with 2016 wages totaling $52.8 million.

Indiana DOT’s new public-private partnership for improving Chicago-Indianapolis passenger rail service has boosted ridership 46% and revenues 64%.
Indiana Gateway:
• INDOT sponsored $75 million project ($71 million federally funded) that was completed in 2016.
• Added a third main track along 25 miles of Norfolk Southern's busy Chicago Line in NW Indiana that hosts 100 daily freight trains and 14 daily passenger trains.
• Passenger trains (including four daily trains to/from the Ohio cities of Bryan, Toledo, Sandusky, Elyria, Cleveland and Alliance) and freight trains are moving through NW Indiana more quickly and efficiently.

Passenger rail expansion:
• Chicago-Ft. Wayne-Lima-Columbus passenger rail has begun a project development process thanks to $350,000 from online communities and businesses from Lima west.
• Chicago-Detroit passenger rail and planning for $1 billion South-of-the-Lake Corridor for 110 mph passenger trains from Porter, IN into Chicago.
• South Shore (Chicago-South Bend) commuter rail carries 3.6 million riders per year. A $210 million double-track project will add more and faster trains, and attract thousands of residents and jobs.
• South Shore West Lake Corridor (Chicago-Munster/Dyer) new commuter rail route estimated at $600 million would generate $45 million in new tax revenues per year.

Funding:
• Indiana's Public Mass Transportation Fund is funded by the state sales tax that generated $60 million in 2016 and leveraged a like amount from the federal government or $120 million total.
• An Electric Rail Service Fund and a Commuter Rail Service Fund receives 0.17 percent of the state sales tax plus railroad real estate taxes to pay for capital and operating expenses, totaling $15.4 million per year.

NOTE: Indiana's legislature in 2016 boosted the state's Public Mass Transportation Fund by putting $6 million more per year over 30 years into the fund as a matching grant to leverage federal funds and support South Shore commuter rail expansion projects listed above.
Summary – $800 million investment over a decade has boosted ridership 60 percent:

- Amtrak operates 10 passenger trains per day serving 22 Michigan stations, plus connecting buses to the Upper Peninsula and to Toledo to connect with Chicago-East Coast trains.
- 800,000 annual riders on Michigan trains.
- Ridership grew 60% over the last decade.
- Michigan sponsors the 10 Amtrak trains for $25 million per year from its Comprehensive Transportation Fund that funds public transit too.
- Michigan invested $800 million in local, state and federal funds for passenger rail infrastructure and equipment improvements.
- Porter, IN-Dearborn, MI (235 miles) rail infrastructure upgraded 2012-2016 for 110 mph in Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac Wolverine Corridor.
- New high-speed locomotives and bi-level rail cars to begin delivery in 2017.
- Stations were built, renovated or repaired at all cities in Michigan since 2000 (planning for new, multi-modal stations in Ann Arbor and Detroit New Center underway—coordinated with local light-rail and regional commuter rail projects).

Dearborn’s new $28 million station is an asset to the city’s downtown to the west and Greenfield Village to the east. Ridership on the 110 mph Wolverine Corridor to Chicago grew more than 60% from 2002-2012.
Michigan Accelerated Rail Corridor:

- Kalamazoo, MI-Porter, IN (97 miles-Amtrak owned) infrastructure allows 110 mph in 2012.
- Kalamazoo-Dearborn (135 miles) acquired from Norfolk Southern by Michigan DOT in 2012.
- Englewood (Chicago) Flyover bridge constructed in 2014.
- West Detroit Jct. bypass track constructed in 2015 to reduce freight/passenger delays.
- Indiana Gateway track capacity enhancement completed in 2016.
- Kalamazoo-Dearborn infrastructure upgraded to allow 110 mph in 2016.
- MDOT added a 2nd track from Wayne-Dearborn in 2016 to reduce freight/passenger delays.
- New high-speed locomotives and bi-level rail cars to begin delivery in 2017.
- Stations built, renovated or repaired at all cities in Michigan since 2000.

Planned expansions:

- New Ann Arbor and Detroit New Center stations for expanded Amtrak and commuter rail services plus light-rail lines in both cities.
- Increase Wolverine Corridor to 10 daily round trips.
- Detroit-Ann Arbor commuter rail.
- Ann Arbor-Howell commuter rail.
- Ann Arbor light-rail transit.
- Coast-2-Coast (Holland-Detroit) rail.
- Ann Arbor-Traverse City A2TC rail.
- Continental Rail Gateway tunnels.

Funding:

Michigan’s Comprehensive Transportation Fund (CTF) was established by the legislature in 1951 to provide ongoing support for public transportation. In the FY 2015 state budget, the Legislature appropriated $280 million from the CTF for passenger rail and public transit. By state law, 10% of Michigan Transportation Fund revenues (motor fuel & vehicle registration taxes) go to the CTF. The remainder comes from a portion of state motor vehicle-related sales taxes. Michigan law prohibits diverting road taxes to non-road uses. Railways are considered a public roadway.

Benefits:

- The 22 Michigan communities with Amtrak stations receive $62 million annually in quantifiable benefits (per a Grand Valley State University study in 2009—at a time when ridership growth had yet to mature coincident with the state’s major upgrading of the Wolverine Corridor to 110 mph).
- This amount includes $20 million per year in traveler cost savings, $2.7 million non-traveler savings, $26 million in local business benefits, and $13 million in benefits from Amtrak expenditures.
- Significant additional benefits also accrue to the region and the state related to traffic congestion relief, safety, energy conservation, and air quality improvement. These benefits are substantial and research for the American Public Transportation Association indicates that safety and vehicle emission costs alone amounted to $0.07 per vehicle-mile.
Summary – Shows it can link cities at both ends of the state with a capital city in the center:

- Amtrak operates 14 passenger trains per day serving 13 Missouri stations plus connecting buses from St. Louis to Carbondale, Evansville and Nashville.
- Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) sponsors the four daily Amtrak trains between St. Louis and Kansas City at $9 million per year.
- 700,000 annual boardings from Missouri stations.
- Since 2009, MoDOT oversaw $71 million ($53 million federal) worth of infrastructure improvements.
- New high-speed locomotives and bi-level rail cars to begin delivery in 2017.
- Passenger trains returned Nov. 17, 2016 to Arcadia, MO for the first time in 48 years when community leaders raised $614,097 to reactivate their historic, stone station.
- 15 highway-rail grade crossing safety improvements are underway.

Benefits
- Ridership grew 72% and revenues grew 127% 2000-15 on the state-supported Missouri River route linking St. Louis and Kansas City via the state capital of Jefferson City.
- MoDOT-sponsored capital improvements raised train on-time performance from 63% in 2008 to near 90% today.
- Customer satisfaction on MoDOT-sponsored trains has risen to 90%.
- Amtrak employed 80 Missouri residents with a total payroll of $6.4 million in 2016.
- Amtrak buys $30 million to $60 million worth of goods and services each year from Missouri companies.
Summary – America's passenger rail Empire:

- Amtrak operates an average of 140 passenger trains per day in the state.
- Amtrak owns or leases more than 130 route-miles of railroad line in New York state.
- More than 10 million boarded Amtrak trains in 2016 at New York City's Penn Station, the busiest Amtrak station in the country.
- Amtrak's 9th-busiest station in 2016 was Albany-Rensselaer with 855,000 boardings.
- New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) sponsors three routes at $44.33 million per year.
- 95 miles of Amtrak-leased Poughkeepsie-Hoffmans route was upgraded by NYSDOT to 110 mph. 73 miles of NYSDOT-owned New York City-Poughkeepsie route are operated at 90 mph.
- NYSDOT, Amtrak and others in New York have more than $20 billion in passenger rail capital improvement projects in development or construction.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D-NY)

New $30 million multi-modal station for Amtrak plus local and intercity buses is under construction in Rochester, NY.

New $43 million Niagara Falls multi-modal transportation center and customs house opened in 2016.

Albany-Rensselaer station, built in 2002 and expanded in 2016 with a fourth station track.
Rail neighbor: NEW YORK (continued)

New York intercity passenger rail job creators:
- **New Intermodal Transportation Ctr**: Niagara Falls; $44 million; completed; 2016.
- **Add fourth station track**: Albany-Rensselaer; $50.5 million; completed; 2016.
- **Reduce congestion at Harold Interlocking**: Queens; $295 million; completed; 2016.
- **New Intermodal Transportation Ctr**: Rochester; $30 million; under construction; 2017.
- **Build 130 Viewliner II rail cars**: Elmira; $298 million; in final assembly; 2017.
- **Relieve rail traffic congestion**: Syracuse; $23 million; underway; 2017.
- **Add 17 miles of second track for sustained 110 mph service**: Hoffmans-Albany; $91.2 million; under construction; 2017.
- **New Amtrak station**: Schenectady; $14.6 million; under construction; 2017.
- **Safety upgrades at road crossings**: Albany-Poughkeepsie; $2.45 million; underway, 2017.
- **Replace old signal lines**: Albany-Rhinecliff; $36.5 million; under construction, 2017.
- **Rebuild Livingston Avenue Bridge**: Albany-Rensselaer; $75 million; in preliminary engineering; 2020.
- **Avelia Liberty high-speed trains**: Hornell/Rochester; 28 new high-speed trains from Alstom to replace Amtrak's Acela Express; $2.4 billion; programming underway; 2022.
- **Moynihan Station**: New York, NY; $6 billion; under construction; 2025.
- **Build two new Hudson River tunnels, upgrade old tunnels**: New York, NY-Newark, NJ; $14 billion; in preliminary engineering; 2033.

A second main track Albany-Schenectady was built in 2016 for sustained 110-mph service and to cut travel delays.

Benefits:
- Ridership in New York state grew 13.6% to 12.6 million boardings over the last five years.
- Amtrak purchased more than $216 million worth of goods and services in New York in 2016, an amount that will dramatically increase over the next decade.
- 1,712 New York residents employed by Amtrak (and more than 2,000 people employed by contractors building Amtrak trains and infrastructure in New York state).
- Total resident employee wages at Amtrak were nearly $132 million in 2016, with more earned by workers at Amtrak contractors in New York.
- More than 721,000 New York residents are members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards frequent user program.
Summary – Ontario realizing half its 25-year $50 billion rail infrastructure vision in 10 years:

- Metro Toronto is North America's fastest growing city, gaining 100,000 people per year.
- To manage its growth, Ontario is investing in rail, making it North America's fastest-growing rail passenger market.
- VIA Rail Canada operates an average of 46 passenger trains per day in Ontario.
- GO Transit operates an average of 180 passenger trains per weekday in Ontario. This will grow five-fold by 2030.
- VIA, Metrolinx and other public entities are acquiring rights of way throughout the province for dedicated passenger tracks to increase service levels and reduce travel time.
- Trains travel at up to 100 mph on many sections, especially in the Windsor-Toronto and Toronto-Ottawa-Montreal corridors.
- As ridership and the number of trains dramatically increases, the same entities are upgrading rail lines from diesel propulsion to electricity.
- VIA and GO trains carried a total of 56 million people in Ontario in 2016.
- Toronto Union Station is the busiest transportation terminal in Canada, and is used by more than 200,000 people each weekday (less on weekends).
- Ottawa, London, Hamilton, Kitchener, Windsor and Niagara Falls are all active multi-modal transportation centers focused around rail connections.
- Metrolinx, which oversees regional public transportation development in Ontario, has a 25-year, $50 billion expansion plan (mostly rail) – $22 billion of which is already under way or completed.

A new Windsor, ON station opened in 2012 to support redevelopment of Canada's southernmost big city. The new station replaced a 50-year-old facility nearby. This airy new station anchors the west of VIA's rail line to London and Toronto over which 10 passenger trains a day travel at up to 100 mph.

Aldershot, ON is a busy rail hub for lines west to London, Sarnia and Windsor, and east to Niagara Falls and Toronto. There is a train an average of every 15 minutes throughout each weekday. Soon that will improve to every seven minutes. Diesel-powered trains will give way to those powered from overhead electric wires.
Rail neighbor: ONTARIO (continued)

Ontario passenger rail job creators:

- **Georgetown South Corridor:** Brampton-Toronto; total reconstruction of rail line with 4-8 passenger-only tracks, tunnels, bridges, new Union-Pearson (U-P) Express, frequent GO trains, VIA intercity and future high-speed trains to London; $1.2 billion; completed; 2015.
- **U-P Express:** Toronto Union Station to Pearson International Airport; $456 million; completed June 2015.
- **Add VIA Windsor/Sarnia-London-Toronto trains;** ongoing progress.
- **Toronto Union Station upgrades:** $1 billion; under construction; 2017.
- **Niagara-Toronto GO:** 14 new daily GO trains; $120 million; underway; 2017.
- **GO Transit RER:** Greater Toronto-Hamilton Regional Express Rail, trains every 15 minutes, dedicated passenger tracks, electrification on five core routes; $13.5 billion; under construction; 2025.
- **SmartTrack:** enhanced GO RER with 5- to 10-minute headways on a 23-mile, 15-station route through Toronto Union Station; $8 billion; in environmental planning; 2024.
- **Windsor-Toronto high-speed rail:** construct new right of way London-Toronto and upgrade CN corridor Windsor-London; $3 billion; environmental assessment underway; 2025.
- **VIA High Performance Rail:** Toronto-Peterborough-Ottawa-Montreal; construct dedicated 110 mph passenger-only tracks on abandoned freight line; $3 billion; plans underway; no timeline.

Benefits:

- Government of Ontario (GO) Transit began as a three-year experiment in 1967 and carried 2.5 million riders in its first year. GO now carries 70 million riders per year; 3 out of 4 ride on trains.
- VIA Rail Canada in 2016 broke summer ridership records going back to 1978 with the addition of new trains and higher speeds (up to 100 mph) in the Windsor-Quebec Corridor.
- Ontario's population will grow by nearly 3 million by 2031. High-level transit (busways, light-rail, subways, commuter rail, intercity rail, high-speed rail) must ensure the smooth flow of commerce.
- Ontario's urban areas have become too car-dependent. So the province in 2006 mandated the development of mixed-use, transit-supportive, cycling- and pedestrian-friendly communities.
- Transforming its transport network will help meet Ontario's Go Green Action Plan for Climate Change by reducing emissions from passenger transportation by half.
- Without significant rail and transit investments, worsening road traffic will reduce Ontario's Gross Domestic Product by $7.2 billion in 2031.
Rail neighbor: PENNSYLVANIA

Summary – A state where good rail/transit funding became great, so did rail/transit growth:

• Pennsylvania is one of only seven states that provide more than $1 billion annually in state-level funding for public transportation.
• The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's (PennDOT) key source of this funding is the Public Transportation Trust Fund (PTTF), established by the legislature in 2007 under Act 44 and expanded through Act 89 of 2013.
• The PTTF is supported by turnpike revenues, state lottery funds, a portion of sales taxes, taxes on motor vehicle leases and rentals, and other fees totaling $1.17 billion in the base year.
• More than 70% of PTTF is for public transportation operations, including intercity passenger rail service. The rest for capital improvements of rail and transit.
• For passenger rail, PennDOT spends more for capital than for operations. It provides $14.5 million per year for operations and can provide up to $8 million per year more for expansion.
• Capital funding for passenger rail is irregular, provided by on a project-by-project basis.
• There are more than 120 passenger trains per day in Pennsylvania used by more than 6 million people a year.

Keystone Corridor

• PennDOT sponsors 14 weekday and 8 weekend day trains each way on Amtrak's Keystone East (Philadelphia-Harrisburg) and one daily train each way Keystone West (Harrisburg-Pittsburgh).
• In 2006, PennDOT and Amtrak tapped Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds for a $145 million upgrade of the Keystone Corridor East, raising train speeds to 110 mph.
• PennDOT tapped Act 44, Act 89, FTA and Federal Railroad Administration funds for a $684 million Keystone East program to replace/rebuild stations with high-level platforms that reduce station dwell times and upgrades electric substations that raise train speeds to 125 mph.
Rail neighbor: PENNSYLVANIA (continued)

Expansions underway/planned
- **Keystone Corridor-East**: Philadelphia-Harrisburg; boost train speeds to 125 mph; $179 million; under construction; 2017.
- **Keystone Corridor-West**: Harrisburg-Pittsburgh; triple passenger rail service frequency and upgrade stations; construction and service plan underway; $12 million; 2020.
- **Keystone Corridor-East**: build/rebuild 12 stations with high-level platforms to reduce station dwell times; total $505 million; progress ranges from planning to completion; 2022.
- **30th Street District Plan**: Philadelphia; improve station facilities and surroundings for Brandywine Realty Trust's 18 million square foot Schuylkill Yards development; environmental planning completed; $2 billion; 2025.
- **Quakertown Rail Restoration**: Lansdale-Perkasie-(Bethlehem?), PA; restore regional rail passenger service on SEPTA-owned tracks; $130 million; in planning; no start date.
- **Scranton Rail Restoration**: Scranton, PA-New York, NY; restore regional rail passenger service; $551 million; New Jersey sections under construction/planning; no completion date.

Benefits:
- Ridership in Pennsylvania grew 50% to more than 6 million boardings over the last decade.
- Amtrak purchased more than $228 million worth of goods and services in Pennsylvania in 2016.
- 2,791 Pennsylvania residents are employed by Amtrak.
- Total resident employee wages at Amtrak were $226 million in 2016.
- More than 350,000 Pennsylvania residents are members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards frequent user program.
- Billions of dollars in station-area real estate developments are planned or underway.
Summary – Major improvements to the Hiawatha Corridor were made, with more coming:

- Amtrak operates 16 trains a day in Wisconsin, plus connecting bus services to off-rail towns.
- More than 900,000 people boarded Amtrak trains in 2016 from eight Wisconsin stations.
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), in partnership with Illinois, sponsors 14 daily Amtrak trains on the Hiawatha Corridor between Milwaukee and Chicago at $6.8 million per year.
- Since 2004 in the Hiawatha Corridor, WisDOT has overseen more than $60 million in capital improvements to replace and upgrade stations in downtown Milwaukee and Sturtevant, add a new station stop at Milwaukee’s General Mitchell International Airport and replace 18 miles of remaining jointed rails with seamless welded rails.
- Most recent investment is a $22 million mezzanine and platform improvements at the Milwaukee Intermodal Station.
- New high-speed locomotives to begin delivery in 2017 will be used on Hiawatha Corridor trains.
Rail neighbor: WISCONSIN (continued)

Major expansions planned:
- WisDOT, in partnership with Illinois and the Federal Railroad Administration, is completing a Tier I environmental assessment of enhancing the Hiawatha Corridor.
- Planned are three new 90 mph express trains per day each way between Milwaukee, Mitchell Airport and Chicago. Capital construction costs are estimated at $155 million.
- The current 807,000 Hiawatha riders are projected to increase to 980,300 per year with the addition of the express trains.
- WisDOT is partnership with Minnesota and Amtrak on a Tier I environmental assessment in 2017 of adding a second daily train Minneapolis-La Crosse-Milwaukee-Chicago.
- Amtrak estimated in 2015 that doubling Minneapolis-Chicago service would double ridership to more than 200,000 annual trips, cost $95 million to implement and require an annual operating support of $6.6 million.

Benefits:
- Hiawatha Corridor ridership increased by an average of 5.9% annually from 2001 to 2013.
- Amtrak purchased $15 million worth of goods and services in Wisconsin in 2016.
- 60 Wisconsin residents are employed by Amtrak.
- Total resident employee wages at Amtrak were $4.6 million in 2016.
- 74,000 Wisconsin residents are members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards frequent user program.
- Wisconsin's shared stations for rail, air, intercity and intracity bus offer tremendous connectivity and accessibility to the state's employers, universities, tourism sites and other destinations.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

Overview of Ohio passenger rail services and federal/state/local support:

- Unlike its neighboring states, Ohio has no ongoing passenger rail development program.
- The Ohio Department of Transportation has provided discretionary funds in recent years to support communities' passenger rail station/multi-modal improvements in Elyria, Sandusky and Toledo. A growing number of similar projects justifies an Ohio passenger rail program.
- Using federal funds, Amtrak offers five passenger trains daily through Ohio on three routes:
  - **Capitol Limited** – daily each way between Chicago-Toledo-Sandusky-Elyria-Cleveland-Alliance-Pittsburgh-Washington DC and other stations;
  - **Cardinal** – thrice weekly each way between Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati-Charleston-Washington DC-Philadelphia-New York City;
  - **Lake Shore Limited** – daily each way between Chicago-Bryan-Toledo-Sandusky-Elyria-Cleveland-Buffalo-Albany-New York City/Boston and other stations.
- These trains carried more than 700,000 riders in 2016 (equals 13 fully loaded Boeing 737 jets/day or 38 fully loaded Greyhound buses/day).
- Amtrak serves seven stations within Ohio: Alliance, Bryan, Cincinnati (only 3 days per week), Cleveland, Elyria, Sandusky, Toledo.
- Amtrak stops at stations across the Ohio River in Maysville, KY, South Portsmouth, KY, Ashland, KY, and Huntington, WV (all served 3 days per week).
- Ohio's Amtrak trains link Chicago and the East Coast on overnight schedules to make rail connections at Amtrak's Chicago hub.
- Since Ohio is roughly midway between Chicago and the East Coast, Amtrak trains serve Ohio stations during the overnight hours.
- 142,363 boardings at Ohio Amtrak stations in 2016.
- Amtrak doesn't initiate new services outside of its National System. It provides additional services in response to sponsorships by states on a purchase-of-service basis.
- Ohio is the nation's most populous state that does not sponsor any passenger rail services.
- Columbus is the most populous metropolitan area in the Western Hemisphere without any scheduled passenger rail service.
- Dayton, Lima, Mansfield, Steubenville, Youngstown and other metro areas are all without scheduled intercity passenger rail services.
- Akron and Canton are “served” by the Amtrak station in nearby Alliance, as well as by the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad.
- Additionally, following a ridership study, Amtrak in 2015 approved adding a station stop in Oxford, OH on its thrice-weekly Cardinal route. The City of Oxford and Miami University each have awarded $350,000 to the construction of a station facility that may cost $1.2 million to build.
- The City of Lima, OH has provided $80,000 to the first phase of planning for high-performance passenger rail to Fort Wayne and Chicago. The rest of the funding for the $350,000 plan is coming from Indiana communities, universities and businesses.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

BRYAN AMTRAK STATION

**Description:** Bryan's aging station needs replacement to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Among all Ohio Amtrak stations, Bryan's was deemed by Amtrak in a 2009 national assessment to be the least ADA-compliant station. Bryan's station structure, platform and pathways all were in non-compliance. In 2011, Amtrak invested $113,900 to provide a new wheelchair lift and install tactile edges along the existing, trackside concrete platform. The 35-year-old station shelter, platform and walkways still need replacement, as does the partially unpaved parking lot. The concrete platform's surface is below the top of the rail of the adjacent track. Platform surfaces are supposed to be 8 inches above the rail. Raising the platform to the standard level also requires replacing the aging waiting shelter that is made of plexiglass and concrete blocks.

**Authority:** Amtrak is responsible for the upkeep of Bryan's unstaffed station structure, platform, walkways and parking. Amtrak has identified that this aging station is not fully ADA-compliant.

**Needed Investment:** Amtrak's 2009 ADA compliance report estimates a capital investment for Bryan of $1,200,000 (adjusted for inflation) for wider platform, Amtrak standard passenger shelter, paved parking lot, accessways, lighting and landscaping. Roughly half of the funding could come from federal and Amtrak funds, with the remainder split between state and local funds.

**Benefits:** Bryan's station is a regional draw. In 2016, 5,787 passengers got on and off Amtrak passenger trains in Bryan (population of 8,527). The station generated $239,076 in revenue for Amtrak in 2016. The local economic benefit derived from passenger rail service is about four times greater than the direct cost of using the service, per U.S. Department of Commerce. The benefit to Bryan and Williams County of having Amtrak service in 2016 was approximately $956,304 from Amtrak customers buying goods and services in the community.

**Status:** Awaiting funding for site designs and construction.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

CINCINNATI STATION TRACK/PLATFORM

**Description:** Additional Cincinnati Union Terminal Amtrak station track with wider platform needed to reduce freight and passenger rail traffic delays near the busy Queensgate Yard.

**Authority:** Hamilton County voters in 2014 approved a five-year, 0.25-percent tax levy to pay for 53 percent of the projected $212 million renovations of the 1930-built Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal. The rest is coming from donations, tax credits and capital grants. Amtrak's existing station waiting room/ticket office above the tracks are part of the funded renovations, now under way. The station track and wider trackside platform will come from state and federal grants. The City of Cincinnati and Amtrak are jointly responsible for maintaining the Amtrak station facilities.

**Needed Investment:** A 2011 study by the City of Cincinnati's Department of Transportation and Engineering plus URS Consultants estimated it would need a station track with electrically powered, dispatcher-controlled switches at both ends and a wider platform (from 12 feet to 26 feet wide, plus relocation of an existing track and utilities, dispatching software changes, new water lines, electricity conduits, and lighting estimated at $4.75 million (adjusted for inflation). Roughly half of the funding could come from federal and Amtrak funds, with the remainder split between state and local funds.

**Benefits:** The second station track and wider platform will help Amtrak expand its Cardinal route through Cincinnati from thrice-weekly to daily and boost ridership 96 percent from 140,000 to 275,000 per year. Freight railroad CSX says the new track will improve flexibility for its intermodal operations at nearby Queensgate yard. It will provide the Museum Center with a location for short-term displays of historic trains. And, in the future, the station track will provide a much-needed overnight layover site for expanded Chicago-Indianapolis-Cincinnati passenger service.

**Status:** Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal renovations are under way, including to the Amtrak waiting room and ticket office above the tracks, however funding has yet to be secured for the station track and wider platform.

The existing station track at left would be augmented with a second station track and wider platform so passengers can board Amtrak trains from either track. This will enhance operational flexibility near CSX's busy Queensgate Yard and reduce delays to passengers and freight.
**Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs**

**CLEVELAND MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION CTR**

**Description:** Co-locating Amtrak, Greyhound, a regional transit bus and rail services at a single, attractive transportation center near downtown Cleveland's lakefront to improve convenience and connectivity for more than 500,000 travelers per year.

**Authority:** With support from multiple stakeholders, the City of Cleveland agreed to pursue All Aboard Ohio's request for tackling several emerging capital needs with a single multi-modal transportation center. These projects include ADA compliance and state-of-good-repair needs for the 1976-built Amtrak station, the need to relocate Greyhound away from a major redevelopment site, a planned walkway over the existing Amtrak station, and a costly to maintain headhouse for the light-rail Waterfront Line's North Coast station. The site is owned by the city but maintained by Amtrak, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority and the city.

**Needed Investment:** A 2016 study by the City of Cleveland, Parsons Brinckerhoff and AECOM showed the project could immediately require about $2 million to design and $50 million to build. Up to $10 million could come from the city and another $4 million from Amtrak, leaving $36 million unfunded. The project may be refined to add more national-in-scope benefits that could bring the total investment to $60 million and the unfunded portion to $46 million.

**Benefits:** Improve convenience and connectivity for 500,000 travelers per year among multiple local, regional and intercity modes of transportation at a single, attractive facility in the heart of downtown Cleveland that will support and enable more than $1 billion public and private developments at the Convention Center, North Coast Harbor and Campus District. Also, station track access enhancements may be sought to reduce freight and passenger rail traffic delays on Norfolk Southern's busy Chicago-East Coast Premier Corridor. Amtrak ridership at Cleveland has grown 29 percent since 2008 (36,977 in 2008 vs 47,757 in 2016).

**Status:** Site selection analysis was completed in 2016 and conceptual-level planning with stakeholder input for a preferred site was completed. The city sought a $37.4 million TIGER grant (it would have been the largest TIGER grant in history) in 2016 and will reportedly try again in 2017 with a project request that may add more national-in-scope benefits and funding partners.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

COLUMBUS-LIMA-CHICAGO AA/SDP

Description: The first step in a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)-compliant Project Development Process (PDP) is under way for the 220-mile Lima-Fort Wayne-Chicago portion of a high-performance passenger and freight rail corridor ultimately linking the Midwest's economic capital (Chicago) with the Midwest's third-largest city (Columbus). Additional funding is needed to expand the planning, comprised of an Alternatives Analysis (AA) and Service Development Plan (SDP) with public involvement, 95 miles east from Lima to Columbus.

Authority: In 2014, the nine largest cities east of Chicago to Columbus, including the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and the Indiana Department of Transportation, entered into a memorandum of understanding to create the Northern Indiana/Ohio Passenger Rail Initiative to pursue development of the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima-Columbus rail corridor. In December 2016, local jurisdictions, businesses and colleges from Lima west to the Illinois line contributed $350,000 to carry out the AA/SDP, to be administered by the Federal Railroad Administration. Funding was also pledged by City of Kenton/Hardin County with more support due from other Ohio businesses and communities to expand the planning east to Columbus.

Needed Investment: Up to $350,000 to expand the planning east to Columbus.

Benefits: The Northern Indiana/Ohio Passenger Rail Corridor Feasibility Study and Business Plan estimated household income benefits of $7.1 billion, federal and state income tax benefits of $1.24 billion, residential property value increases of $2.6 billion, employment growth over the life of the project at more than 26,000 jobs, and temporary construction jobs are estimated at 12,000 per year. Train travel is usually less expensive than by car or airplane, reduces the need for additional road traffic lanes, and provides mobility for all, especially the Baby Boomer and Millennial generations.

Status: The Lima-Fort Wayne-Chicago AA/SDP, to be administered by the Federal Railroad Administration, got under way in December 2016 and is due to be completed in 2017. Planning for the Lima-Columbus portion can be added to the AA/SDP as soon as funding is available.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

LORAIN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNITY CENTER (ELYRIA)

Description: Add Amtrak station facilities to the Lorain County Transportation & Community Center (LCTCC) in downtown Elyria. The LCTCC, recently renovated from the historic New York Central Railroad depot, already hosts Greyhound and Lorain County Transit bus services.

Authority: At the urging of All Aboard Ohio, Lorain County bought and renovated the 1925-built New York Central Railroad Depot as the LCTCC in 2008. Funding in place for relocating Amtrak to the LCTCC includes $5 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation, $2.9 million from Amtrak, and $545,000 in turnpike toll credits from ODOT's Office of Transit.

Needed Investment: Lorain County has amassed all but $500,000 of the necessary funding for the $9 million construction of Amtrak station facilities at the LCTCC.

Benefits: Amtrak annual ridership at Elyria has grown 76 percent since 2008 (from 3,426 to 6,018). Relocating Amtrak's Elyria station, now on East Bridge Street in a remote area east of downtown, to the LCTCC offers more than just greater convenience and connectivity for travelers. The planned two-platform, two-track station facility also offers an opportunity to reduce passenger and freight rail traffic delays associated with having to operate half of Amtrak's daily passenger trains through Elyria against the flow of rail traffic to put a passenger train on the track closest to the Elyria station's single platform. Addressing this shortcoming is also essential for future expansion of passenger rail service to Elyria.

Status: Project is in final engineering, including possibly scaling the project to match available financial resources.
MENTOR MULTI-MODAL STATION

**Description:** Construct a new, multi-modal transportation center for Laketran buses and Amtrak trains on the newly extended Plaza Boulevard north of Euclid Avenue and Great Lakes Mall.

**Authority:** The City of Mentor has requested a feasibility study of a proposed station stop on Amtrak's *Lake Shore Limited* route between Chicago, New York City and Boston.

**Needed Investment:** Although a final cost estimate is not available, a new, unstaffed, standard-design Amtrak station facility typically costs up to $1.5 million. Additional accessways and facilities may be needed to accommodate Laketran buses and customers.

**Benefits:** There is no station stop between Erie, PA and Cleveland – a distance of 95 miles. Mentor's population of 47,000 and Lake County's population of 230,000 is 25 miles east of the Cleveland Amtrak station – the same distance is Elyria's Amtrak station is west from Cleveland's. Elyria's population is 54,000 and Lorain County's population is 303,000. Annual ridership at the Elyria station has grown 76 percent since 2008 (from 3,426 to 6,018). Amtrak revenues at Elyria in 2016 were $359,683. The multiplier benefit to Elyria and Lorain County of having Amtrak service in 2016 was approximately $1.4 million from Amtrak customers buying goods and services in the community. This experience will likely be similar in Mentor due to the number of restaurants, hotels and retailers near the proposed station site.

**Status:** Awaiting a study of the proposed Amtrak station stop.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

OXFORD AMTRAK STATION

Description: Construct a new, unstaffed, standard-design Amtrak station facility on publicly owned land on Chestnut Street.

Authority: Following a feasibility study, Amtrak approved adding a station stop on its Cardinal route in Oxford, Ohio. In January 2017, the City of Oxford and Miami University each committed $350,000 to the construction of an Amtrak station facility. The city also spent $400,000 to acquire a residential property and demolish a house to improve vehicular access to the site.

Needed Investment: Up to $500,000 in additional funds may be needed to construct an Amtrak station. To develop the site as a multi-modal transportation center and bus garage for the Butler County Regional Transit Authority, more funding is being sought.

Benefits: After Greater Cincinnati, the second-largest source of student enrollment for Miami University is from Greater Chicago – the western terminus of Amtrak's Cardinal route. However there is no interstate highway or commercial airport near Oxford. Amtrak also is seeking funding to increase the frequency of its Cardinal service from thrice-weekly to daily and Indiana officials are interested in extending its Chicago-Indianapolis Hoosier State service to southeast Indiana and Cincinnati. These expansions would greatly increase the utility of the Oxford station.

Status: Station project is in final design in anticipation of procuring the last funding piece.
RAVENNA-KENT MULTI-MODAL STATION

Description: Construct a new, multi-modal transportation center for Portage Area Regional Transit Authority (PARTA) buses and Amtrak trains south or west of Ravenna, pending a site selection study.

Authority: The City of Ravenna and PARTA have requested a feasibility study of a proposed station stop on Amtrak’s Capitol Limited route between Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Washington DC.

Needed Investment: Although a final cost estimate is not available, a new, unstaffed, standard-design Amtrak station facility typically costs up to $1.5 million. If sited on the proposed Ravenna Connection track, the infrastructure investment could increase by about $10 million. Additional accessways and facilities may be needed to accommodate PARTA buses and customers. Planning funds are needed immediately and could amount to $1 million.

Benefits: Amtrak recently approved a station stop on its Cardinal route at Oxford, OH (population 21,000), home to Miami University (enrollment 18,000). Oxford is about 25 rail miles from the nearest Amtrak station stop in Connersville, IN. A station at Ravenna-Kent (population 44,000), home to Kent State University (enrollment 41,000), is 20 rail miles from the nearest Amtrak station stop in Alliance, OH. Annual ridership at the Alliance station has grown 40 percent since 2008 (from 3,720 to 5,191). Amtrak revenues at Alliance in 2016 were $318,213. The multiplier benefit to Alliance and Stark County of having Amtrak service in 2016 was nearly $1.3 million from Amtrak customers buying goods and services in the community.

Status: Awaiting a study of the proposed Amtrak station stop.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

SANDUSKY MULTI-MODAL STATION

Description: Renovation and repairs to the historic, 1892-built New York Central Railroad depot, owned by the City of Sandusky. The depot is home to the Sandusky Transit System/Sandusky-Perkins Area Ride Connection STS/SPARC offices and garage, as well as the Amtrak passenger station. STS/SPARC also seeks Greyhound and GO Bus services to locate at the depot.

Authority: ODOT Office of Transit in 2016 awarded $76,000 from a federal TIGER grant matched by $84,000 from the City of Sandusky to upgrade STS/SPARC's depot to upgrade technology and repairs to the foundation and drainage. STS/SPARC, the city and Amtrak are planning additional facility repairs and site improvements for it to become an ADA-compliant, multi-modal station.

Needed Investment: Additional repairs and updates to the Amtrak's Sandusky station waiting room to accommodate Greyhound/GO Bus passengers, renovate the express building, resurface parking, and construct an ADA-compliant, 550-foot-long trackside platform are estimated at about $2 million.

Benefits: Amtrak ridership at Sandusky has grown 64 percent from 5,832 persons getting on/off trains in 2008 to 9,593 in 2016. Amtrak revenues at Sandusky in 2016 were $517,937. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, the multiplier benefit to Sandusky and Erie County of having Amtrak service in 2016 was nearly $2.1 million from Amtrak customers buying goods and services in the community. Co-locating STS/SPARC, Amtrak, Greyhound and GO Bus services will improve the convenience and connectivity for tens of thousands of travelers per year among multiple local, regional and intercity modes of transportation at a single, attractive facility in the historic core of Sandusky – the largest tourism destination in Ohio.

Status: Initial technology upgrades and repairs are underway. Design of additional repairs and renovations is continuing, but would gain higher priority if more funding was readily available.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

TOLEDO MLK PLAZA STATION

Description: Repairs and enhancements to the passenger rail facilities at Toledo's Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza to update the station and to allow more than one passenger train at a time to get off the Norfolk Southern mainline to reduce delays to passenger and freight rail traffic.

Authority: The Ohio Rail Development Commission in 2016 awarded $938,300 (a federal grant by Rep. Marcy Kaptur) to the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority to improve Toledo Amtrak station facilities, including resurfaced platforms, tactile edges, signage, drainage and canopy repairs. The port authority will contribute about $250,000 to make interior station improvements. This follows $500,000 invested by the port authority in relocating Greyhound facilities to the station in 2016. A 24-hour Subway sandwich shop joined it. Previously, in 2013, Amtrak rebuilt the two tracks through the station for about $500,000 but the 1,500-foot-long platforms next to them continue to decay.

Needed Investment: In addition to the completed and funded investments noted above, local officials are considering alternatives for additional improvements, including establishing overhead access to the station platforms. At minimum, this could include constructing a new elevator to the second platform. At maximum, the concourse above the tracks (Level 3) with new elevators, stairwells and passageways. Projected investment could be about $5 million.

Benefits: Resurfacing two platforms and providing overhead access (stairwells and elevators) via the concourse level will allow more than one passenger train to get off the NS mainline and simultaneously process passengers at Toledo. This will reduce delays to passenger and freight rail traffic. The proposed capital improvements may also be necessary for future expansion of passenger rail service to Toledo.

Status: Final design is under way for the resurfaced platforms but alternatives are being considered for the overhead access.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

TOLEDO MAUMEE RIVER BRIDGE

Description: Rebuild and augment the aging Norfolk Southern Corp. (NS) movable bridge over the Maumee River just east of MLK Plaza Station and NS crew change point with a second rail span.

Authority: Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments has included this as a priority project in its long-range transportation plan.

Needed Investment: While the total projected cost is not yet known, it will likely be a $250 million investment to rebuild or replace the existing movable bridge (this portion of the Maumee River is navigable) and to add a passenger-only track deck. However the immediate need is for environmental planning, engineering and permitting which could involve an upfront commitment of about $4 million.

Benefits: Up to 100 freight trains and 4 passenger trains cross the existing, 100-year-old bridge each day. That’s more than the daily freight volume moved via the Ohio Turnpike and the daily passenger volume handled by a dozen, fully loaded Boeing 737 jets. There is no readily available detour route in the event there is a loss of this bridge due to mechanical or structural failure, a natural disaster, or terrorist incident. The bridge represents a single-point failure risk to the national transportation system. The biggest threat to the existing bridge is from a boat collision, as the opening in the swing span is only 109 feet – many lake ships are 100 feet wide. Also, rail freight tonnage is projected to grow 22 percent by 2035 while use of passenger trains through Toledo has grown 20 percent since 2000. Additional trains will put even greater pressure on this aging span.

Status: Environmental planning is awaiting the availability of funding.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

TOLEDO-CLEVELAND TIER 1 EIS/SDP

**Description:** Improving the existing passenger and freight rail services and increasing the capacity of Norfolk Southern's Premier Corridor with enhanced rail infrastructure and station facilities. The first step in the Project Development Process (PDP) is a Service Development Plan (SDP) combined with a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

**Authority:** In 2014, the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, the Erie County Regional Planning Commission and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency entered into a memorandum of understanding to create the Northern Ohio Rail Alliance to improve passenger and freight rail services.

**Needed Investment:** $2 million (more if expanded to include Detroit and/or Akron, Youngstown and Pittsburgh).

**Benefits:** The Ohio Hub Plan economic impact study estimated the ratio of benefits to costs of 1.4 to 1 at the low end and 1.8 to 1 at the high end. These results are comparable to or stronger than those for other passenger rail enhancements planned, underway or completed in the Midwest, Florida, Texas, Pacific Northwest and Southeast corridors. Train travel is usually less expensive than by car or airplane, reduces the need for additional road traffic lanes, and provides mobility for all, especially the Baby Boomer and Millennial generations.

**Status:** Planning can commence as soon as funding is available.
Ohio's Immediate Rail Needs

A summary of Ohio's overall and immediate passenger rail needs are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>TOTAL INVESTMENT</th>
<th>IMMEDIATE NEED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bryan Amtrak station</td>
<td>$1.2 million</td>
<td>$1.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati station track/platform</td>
<td>$4.75 million</td>
<td>$4.75 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleveland multi-modal transportation center</td>
<td>Up to $60 million</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columbus-Lima-Chicago AA/SDP</td>
<td>$700,000</td>
<td>$350,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lorain County Transportation &amp; Community Ctr (Elyria)</td>
<td>$9 million</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentor multi-modal station</td>
<td>Up to $5 million</td>
<td>$1.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Amtrak station</td>
<td>$1.2 million</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravenna-Kent multi-modal station</td>
<td>Up to $11.5 million</td>
<td>$1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandusky multi-modal station</td>
<td>$2.2 million</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo MLK Plaza station</td>
<td>$5 million</td>
<td>$3.8 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo Maumee River bridge</td>
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<td>$4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo-Cleveland Tier 1 EIS/SDP</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**TOTAL**                                          | **$23.6 million**|

Note that these represent a cross-section of projects that are in varying stages of the project development process. Some are at a very early stage and require funding for planning and design so that they can become “shovel-ready” once construction funds are available. So the Immediate Need funding shown above may be to get the project into the project development process. Others are already in the project development process, have a locally preferred option identified, may have a record of decision from a federal oversight agency, and need funding for final design and construction. At the other end, some projects' Immediate Need is for a final piece of funding to round out the funding package so construction can begin. However, regardless of their standing, all of these projects can begin, substantially advance or complete the project development process within the 2018-19 biennial budget of the Ohio Department of Transportation.
Ohio's Future Rail Needs/Concepts

A number of conceptual passenger rail projects have been noted in regional planning activities, by elected officials or by advocacy organizations. All of these would require a public entity to administer and sponsor programmatic planning efforts that would take years to carry out. These conceptual efforts could include:

Central Ohio regional rail – Growing employment, driving costs, and worsening traffic and parking issues, especially in and near the Ohio State University and downtown Columbus, are prompting consideration of regional passenger rail on routes from downtown to the northern and eastern suburbs.

Columbus-Pittsburgh passenger rail – Northern Indiana interests not only want passenger rail east to Columbus but also to Pittsburgh via the state-owned Panhandle Rail Line via Newark, Coshocton and Steubenville. If an Indiana-Pittsburgh routing via Columbus isn’t possible, an alternative may be to route passenger service via Mansfield and Canton or via existing Amtrak routes through Toledo and Cleveland.

NE Ohio regional rail – As a result of recent regional planning activities to increase access to jobs and promote economic development in existing communities, elected officials, urban planners and the business community are urging consideration of a hub-and-spoke network of regional express bus and rail connectors and local transit circulators link jobs with job-seekers.

NW Ohio-Ann Arbor/Detroit regional rail – Numerous institutions of higher learning, employers and airports/transportation centers would be connected under concepts advanced by the Ohio Higher Education Rail Network based in Bowling Green.

SW Ohio regional rail – Worsening traffic congestion, urban sprawl and rising driving costs have prompted elected leaders in the Cincinnati-Hamilton-Dayton region to seek transportation investments that would better link residents and employers in existing communities as well as to Midwest, national and international transportation services.

Denver Union Station is the center of a regional rail network that is rapidly growing synergistically with downtown Denver's central business district. Minneapolis’ North Star regional rail service continues to grow and will soon extend east to St. Paul and connect with more of the Twin City's light-rail system.
Ohio Public Policy Recommendations

All Aboard Ohio is very concerned about the lack of funding for public transportation and rail programs overall, and especially the lack of a dedicated fund for these transportation modes. With seven out of 10 Ohio citizens living in metropolitan areas, Ohio's economy is driven by its cities and the public transportation linkages within and between them. They must be supported by our state's elected officials.

Therefore, All Aboard Ohio urges Ohio Gov. John Kasich and the 132nd Ohio General Assembly to make whole Ohio transit's and rail systems for whom two-thirds of their riders use in order to reach their jobs. We are not satisfied with retaining Ohio's nationally low levels of financial support for rail and transit. Instead, we seek to double it with funding coming from within the ODOT – not general fund revenues. And, we urge that the jurisdiction for passenger rail development be moved from the Ohio Rail Development Commission to ODOT's Office of Transit by including passenger rail among the office's modal responsibilities.

1. Double state funding for public transportation in Ohio --
   • As was well-documented in the 2016 ODOT Transit Needs Study, Ohio ranks very low nationally in its support for public transportation. MORE: http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/Transit/TransitNeedsStudy/Pages/StudyHome.aspx
   • Ohio is the 7th-most populous state in the nation. The top-10 states at funding public transit do so at a rate of at least $50 per capita. Ohio funds transit at 63 cents per capita.
   • ODOT's $7.2 million per year in state general funds for transit leverages $20 million in federal funds. Combined, the amount is slightly less than what ODOT spends to cut grass four times per year along freeways in Ohio.
   • Only 1 out of 4 jobs in Ohio metro areas is reachable within a 90-minute transit trip and 1 out of 10 jobs is reachable within a 60-minute transit trip. MORE: https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0512_jobs_transit.pdf
   • Ohio rural and urban transit systems face a $500 MILLION unfunded backlog of replacing aging buses and trains.
   • By 2025, an additional $562.1 MILLION in annual funding is needed to meet growing demand of more than 140 million additional annual trips on public transportation.
   • ALL ABOARD OHIO urges state officials to create a dedicated fund for public transportation and passenger rail, and to double the state funding available each year for these programs. See Page 36 for a discussion of funding opportunities.

2. Make whole Ohio's transit and rail systems --
   • Eight transit systems in Ohio are supported, in part, by countywide sale taxes, in Cuyahoga, Franklin, Lake, Mahoning, Montgomery, Portage, Stark & Summit. Due to urban sprawl, more Internet-based sales (now 25 percent of all sales), and other policy challenges, this funding resource is waning.
   • Changes in how Medicare Managed Care Organizations (MCO) purchases are taxed will result in these transit systems losing up to 10 percent of their overall sales tax funding which represents a majority of these systems' revenues. MORE: http://www.ecaoo.org/userfiles/Fed%20Regulations%20may%20impact%20OH%20sales%20tax.pdf
Ohio Public Policy Recommendations

- A 10 percent cut to transit system budgets at a time when expansion is needed to address a growing geographical disconnect between jobs and job-seekers due to urban sprawl would be devastating.
- Ohio's largest transit system, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, faces a $17 million per year loss of revenue. For comparison, GCRTA in 2016 cut routes by 3 percent, cutting off access to jobs for thousands of people, and raised fares 20 percent to address a $7 million shortfall.
- A small transit system like the Portage Area Regional Transit Authority expects to lose $314,198 in annual sales tax revenue due to the Medicaid MCO issue. To cope, PARTA could eliminate one of its few routes with all-day service or make painful service cuts to all of its routes or undertake large fare hikes.
- ALL ABOARD OHIO seeks to join with other stakeholders in urging that the remedies for the state, county and transit agency sale taxes do no worse than make whole these funding recipients and remedy them in a sustainable, long-term manner. This could include modernizing Ohio's sales tax policy so it includes Internet purchases.

3. Move the passenger rail development jurisdiction from the Ohio Rail Development Commission to ODOT's Office of Transit and rename it the ODOT Passenger Division

- Although no formal plan is yet in place, administration officials have sought to convert the Ohio Rail Development Commission, currently the state agency with statutory jurisdiction over passenger rail development, into the ODOT Freight Division.
- Thus it would seem logical that there also be an ODOT Passengers Division. Passenger rail and public transportation typically function synergistically, with customers connecting between each mode. Some states such as Virginia and Pennsylvania combined their passenger rail and public transportation development programs into the same department. Michigan supports passenger rail and public transportation from the same funding source.
- In addition to supporting urban and rural public transportation programs, ODOT's Office of Transit also supports intercity surface transportation through its GoBus program MORE: http://ridegobus.com/
- ODOT Transit is already funding Amtrak station improvements as part of multi-modal transportation centers in Elyria and Sandusky.
- When administered by the ORDC, the passenger transportation capital and operating expenditures approvals processes are much more cumbersome than those at ODOT Transit.
- The small scale of Ohio's passenger rail development activities and Ohio's outdated, unnecessarily complicated capital and operating grant approvals processes at the Ohio Rail Development Commission are more reasons for assigning the passenger rail jurisdiction to ODOT's Office of Transit.
- ALL ABOARD OHIO urges that ORC5501.03(9)(C) and appropriate sections hereafter be amended to direct ODOT's Office of Transit to be the division responsible for passenger rail planning, development and coordination with other forms of rural, urban and intercity public transportation and rename ODOT's Office of Transit as the ODOT Passengers Division.
Ohio Public Policy Recommendations

Ohio Passenger Rail Funding Opportunities

Presented here, in no particular order, are what All Aboard Ohio believes to be legal funding alternatives. Most of these are existing funding resources and some of them are used for discretionary purposes. All Aboard Ohio urges that these be dedicated to passenger rail and public transportation planning, development, improvement and operations.

Ohio “Off-Road” fuel taxes

All Ohioans pay state and federal fuel taxes when they petroleum from a pump at commercial retailing establishments. The fuel taxes are included in the price when you buy the gasoline, ethanol, diesel fuel and other petroleum products. During bookkeeping, the merchant separates the tax from the purchase and passes on the tax payment to state or federal government. The merchant does not know what kind of vehicle you were fueling at the time you paid the tax – or even if you were fueling a vehicle. Many customers are actually refilling a gasoline can that will later be used to replenish a fuel tank for an off-road vehicle, recreational vehicle, construction machine, landscaping equipment or some other motor being used for a non-roadway purpose.

According to the federal Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 3-5 percent of all fuel purchases are for “off-road” activities. If this federal data is transferable to Ohio and determined by the Ohio Attorney General’s office to be not subject to Article XII, Sec. 5a of the Ohio Constitution, about $36 million per year of existing state fuel taxes are generated by “off-road” activities.

ALL ABOARD OHIO urges Gov. John Kasich and Ohio’s General Assembly to direct ODOT to set aside about 4 percent annually in “off-road” fuel taxes for multi-modal transportation programs including public transportation, passenger rail, multi-modal transportation centers, and other non-highway transportation programs as permitted under Article XII, Sec. 5a of the Ohio Constitution.

Turnpike Infrastructure “Nexus” projects

On July 1, 2013, the Ohio Turnpike Commission officially became the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission (“OTIC”) with the passage and signing of House Bill 51. With it, OTIC's mission now officially encompasses both:

- Funding, operating and maintaining the Ohio Turnpike at its current standards; and
- Funding “Infrastructure Projects” in partnership with ODOT.

The latter expanded the general purposes of OTIC to specify that it may finance the capital for infrastructure projects with a “nexus” to the Turnpike. “Nexus” is defined as including a project's:

- Physical proximity and connectivity to the Ohio Turnpike;
- Impact on Ohio Turnpike traffic and revenues;
- Impact on the movement of goods and services on or in the area of the Ohio Turnpike; and
- Enhancement or improvement of access between the Ohio Turnpike and connected areas of population, commerce and industry.
Ohio Public Policy Recommendations

Several current and proposed rail stations are near the Ohio Turnpike and planned passenger rail corridor improvements parallel the Ohio Turnpike. These are within the nexus of the turnpike and could enhance the rail traffic handling capacity of rail corridors for carrying more passengers and freight. The latter usually involves heavy, bulk commodities that, when hauled by truck, cause excessive damage to pavement and bridges.

A report by the Kansas Rural Development Council looked at impacts on highway pavement conditions if short-line freight railroads were shut down and rail traffic was diverted from train to truck. The report found that pavement damage ranged from $4 to $8 per truck-mile per year. That data works in reverse, too, resulting in cost savings to transportation departments that invest in railroads. Thus, for each truck-mile per year diverted to rail saves $4 to $8 in highway pavement damage. The Kansas Rural Development Council’s estimate did not include damage to highway bridge structures.

Commercial vehicle tolls are based on an average vehicle weight. Thus it could be very cost-effective for OTIC to invest in parallel rail corridors to move the heaviest tonnage off its roadway and onto rails maintained by the private sector. In 2013, OTIC sold $1 billion in revenue bonds to finance Nexus transportation projects. Additional bond sales may occur in the future.

Regarding legality, as is the case with ODOT, revenues from OTIC concessions and leases may not be subject to Article XII, Sec. 5a of the Ohio Constitution. Concessions and leases account for $15 million to $17 million per year in recent years, or about 5.5 percent of total revenues. Of the total 2013 Nexus transportation bond issue, about $50 million could have been legally used for rail development.

ALL ABOARD OHIO urges Gov. John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly to direct OTIC to dedicate 5.5 percent of OTIC's annual budget for Nexus rail projects (i.e., rail and transit programmatic planning and project development, construction of multi-modal transportation centers, and other eligible activities under HB51) in partnership with ODOT.

Toll Revenue Credit Authority

Because the Ohio Turnpike is a federal interstate highway but does not use federal funds, the federal government since 1991 has allowed Ohio to use “Toll Revenue Credits” to raise the federal funding share above the 80 percent maximum to reduce the local contribution. It is a “soft match” – not funds or cash. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) has more than $100 million of toll credit authority. Despite early disinterest in Toll Revenue Credits, ODOT now uses the entire toll credit authority available to it each year.

The amount is increasing, however. More state funding through recent bonding against the Ohio Turnpike and Infrastructure Commission revenues, including tolls increased 2.7 percent per year until 2023, will result in ODOT earning a significant balance of toll credits over the next few years. Most of ODOT's toll credit authority is used for roads and bridges when a local share is unavailable.
Additionally, about $60 million per year in toll credit authority is made available to Ohio’s Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in four-year blocks. The current four-year block started in 2016, coinciding with the federal transit formula grant period. This amount is proportionate to the MPOs’ share of the total statewide MPO programs’ annual budget.

For example, ODOT is making $37.9 million ($7.6 million annually) in toll credit authority available to the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) in state fiscal years (SFYs) 2016-2020. An unused balance can be brought forward in a four-year period but future credits cannot be used to meet current obligations. NOACA’s toll credits break down as follows:

- $6,878,189 in Surface Transportation Program (STP)
- $706,460 in Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

Eligible federal-aid projects are U.S. Code Title 23 highway capital improvements and Title 49, Chapter 53 transit projects. Thus, some of the transit projects include:

- Metropolitan transportation planning;
- Pilot program for transit-oriented development planning;
- Statewide and nonmetropolitan transportation planning;
- State of good repair grants (rolling stock, track, stations, facilities, etc);
- Fixed guideway capital investment grants;
- Positive train control installation grants.

ALL ABOARD OHIO urges Gov. John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly to direct ODOT to set aside $5 million per year in Toll Revenue Credit Authority to be awarded to rural and small city (less than 50,000 people) rail and transit programmatic planning and project development, construction of multi-modal transportation centers, and other eligible activities under USC Title 49, Chapter 53.

Specialized Interest License Plates revenue

Also called “vanity plates,” Specialized Interest License Plates involve an optional fee to decorate a motorist's vehicle in addition to the basic, required vehicle registration fees that are necessary for supporting highway-related costs. Because these revenues are derived from a product that decorates a vehicle, rather than used for highway-related costs, they have been deemed to be outside Article XII, Sec. 5a of the Ohio Constitution.

This is true in Oregon as well, where the state uses the entire revenues derived from vanity plates to support the state’s intercity passenger rail programs. Oregon has a similar constitutional restriction to Ohio’s that prohibits the spending of highway user revenues on anything other than highways. Ohio also spends revenues from Specialized Interest License Plates to non-highway uses. For example, license plates that contain a conservation message generate revenues for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. There are other types of special interest license plates as well.
Ohio Public Policy Recommendations

Total revenues generated by Ohio's Specialized Interest License Plates program have grown to $17 million per year in recent years.

ALL ABOARD OHIO urges Gov. John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly to direct ODOT to dedicate $5 million per year in Specialized Interest License Plates revenue to support rail and transit programmatic planning and project development, capital improvement programs, and operating assistance programs on a competitive grant basis.

Ohio Logo Signing Program profits

The Ohio Logo Signing Program permits eligible businesses that provide fuel, food, lodging, camping or attraction services to road users to have their logos placed on Specific Service (Logo) signs at rural and urban freeway and expressway interchanges. This program is operated by a private company working under contract with ODOT.

This private company shares profits from this program with ODOT which, in turn uses these funds for discretionary activities. They are not dedicated or directed by statute to any ODOT program or activity, and are not subject to Article XII, Sec. 5a of the Ohio Constitution. All Aboard Ohio understands that profits to ODOT from the Ohio Logo Signing program have amounted to about $5 million per year in recent years.

ALL ABOARD OHIO urges Gov. John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly to direct ODOT to dedicate to passenger rail and public transit development the profits ODOT receives from the Ohio Logo Signing Program.

Ohio share of Volkswagen Settlement

Aside from growing turnpike tolls and fuel taxes, this is the totally only new revenue source listed. The revenue involves Ohio's portion of the Volkswagen consent decree/settlement to offset the effects of diesel emissions. The amount is anticipated to be $71.4 million over 10 years. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposes to utilize these funds for grants and other efforts that can produce the greatest air quality benefits such as nitrogen oxides (NOx) emission reductions, reduced public exposure to the pollutants in diesel exhaust and the promotion of clean vehicle technologies.

In two related settlements, German automaker Volkswagen AG and its subsidiaries have agreed to spend up to $14.7 billion to settle allegations of manipulating emissions tests and deceiving customers. In addition, the companies will spend $4.7 billion to mitigate pollution from these cars, and invest in green vehicle technology.

Ohio EPA is preparing to submit a plan to a national Mitigation Trust Fund showing how the state expects to award approximately $15 million per year in grants beginning in 2018. Eligible projects to receive these grants include the repower or replacement of: diesel school, shuttle and transit buses; large and medium trucks; freight switcher locomotives; the repower of ferries and tugboats; airport
Ohio Public Policy Recommendations

ground support equipment; forklifts and port cargo handling equipment; and shorepower to enable Great Lakes and ocean-going ships to shut off engines while at berth.

Per the terms of the settlement, state plans must direct funding to areas that bear a disproportionate share of effects of diesel emissions. Ohio EPA has created a map showing the counties where the Agency believes eligible projects should receive first and secondary priority for the available funds. Most of these are Ohio’s most urbanized counties where passenger rail and transit are used most.

All Aboard Ohio responded to Ohio EPA’s request for stakeholder comments in late-2016, urging that replacing aging diesel transit vehicles with new, clean-fuel transit vehicles be given the greatest priority for Volkswagen settlement funds. This was echoed by others, including Greater Ohio. All Aboard Ohio further urged that Ohio EPA work jointly with ODOT’s Office of Transit to maximize the value of the Volkswagen settlement funds by using them to leverage Federal Transit Administration vehicle modernization grants. Ohio EPA’s draft mitigation plan will be available in spring of 2017.

ALL ABOARD OHIO urges Gov. John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly to support our recommendation to Ohio EPA regarding the use of these funds, and to maximize their value by awarding them in concert with ODOT’s Office of Transit to leverage Federal Transportation Administration funds to modernize Ohio transit vehicle fleets.

By dedicating $7.5 million in VW settlement funds to transit vehicle modernization, ODOT Transit could leverage another $30 million in federal funds, or $37.5 million total per year over five years ($187.5 million total). This would more than double ODOT Transit’s current $27 million annual budget, some of which (ie: $2 million per year) could then be dedicated passenger rail planning and development.

Bus registration/CDL fees

Ohio levies no user fees on passenger rail or public transportation carriers or other activities and has no dedicated fund for the development of passenger rail or transit. But there is one fee that Ohio levies which could be considered a user fee – vehicle registration fees on buses and Commercial Drivers License (CDL) fees on bus drivers.

An analysis was done of Ohio vehicle registration fees and the number of buses in fleets based in Ohio. We also analyzed the number of bus drivers at Ohio transit agencies getting and renewing CDLs with passenger specifications. Based on this data, it is estimated that Ohio generates about $1.3 million per year in recent years from bus registration and CDL fees.

ALL ABOARD OHIO urges Gov. John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly to direct ODOT to dedicate to public transportation programs all revenues from bus registration and CDL/passenger fees.
Ohio Public Policy Recommendations

ODOT telecom lease revenues

ODOT currently receives about $2 million per year in lease revenues from telecommunications companies that have placed communication towers on ODOT properties. These revenues do not appear to be subject to Article XII, Sec. 5a of the Ohio Constitution since non-motorists also can and do use these communication towers.

ALL ABOARD OHIO urges Gov. John Kasich and the Ohio General Assembly to direct ODOT to dedicate to passenger rail and public transportation programs all revenues from ODOT telecom lease revenues.

All Aboard Ohio has identified a variety of Ohio Department of Transportation sources from which passenger rail and public transit development may be funded in compliance with Ohio laws:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THESE CAN BE FLEXED TO RAIL AT AMOUNTS UP TO:</th>
<th>MAX. ANNUAL AMOUNT (2018 $)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Revenue Funds</td>
<td>No Maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio “Off-Road” fuel taxes</td>
<td>$36 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnpike Infrastructure “Nexus” projects</td>
<td>$17 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio share of Volkswagen Settlement</td>
<td>$7.5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio Logo Signing Program profits</td>
<td>$7 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toll Revenue Credit Authority</td>
<td>$5 million</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialized Interest License Plates revenue</td>
<td>$5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODOT telecom lease revenues</td>
<td>$2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus registration/CDL fees</td>
<td>$1.3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$80.8 million</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**NOTE:** only state funds are shown (except toll revenue credits which instead allow more federal funds to be used in lieu of a local match). They can and should be used to leverage federal transit and federal railroad funds. Even if these state funding amounts aren’t augmented with local and private funds, they could generate significant annual investment in passenger rail and public transportation. In total, the amount could exceed $400 million per year.

**Policy objectives for the ODOT Biennial Budget of 2018-19:**

- Fund passenger rail development from one or more of the above sources at $11.8 million per year of the 2018-19 biennium.
- Change the oversight jurisdiction of passenger rail development from the Ohio Rail Development Commission to the ODOT Office of Transit.
CONCLUSION

It is not accurate to say there is no money for passenger rail. There are many ways to legally fund these important programs and services with existing resources. Indeed the financial resources are far in excess of the annual funding need. It will, however, require greater awareness of the benefits of passenger rail and, with that, more political will to direct those resources to rail and other public transportation investments.

Also readily available is evidence, both in real-world examples from our neighboring states and economic impact studies of proposed Ohio services, of the benefits from investing in rail infrastructure and services. These real examples and Ohio studies show that investing in passenger rail generates long-term economic benefits that are 1.4 to 1.8 times greater than the initial investment.

The ongoing support produces even greater quantifiable benefits. The Michigan Department of Transportation, for example, purchases Amtrak service at $25 million per year. Yet, according to a Grand Valley State University study (commissioned by MDOT) in 2009 before the state began upgrading rail infrastructure to 110 mph, Michigan enjoyed $62 million per year in community benefits from the passenger rail services.

“Investing in rail service will spark economic development in communities along a corridor linking Detroit and Chicago, two vital Midwest cities. Michigan can be the centerpiece of a broader logistical connection that goes all the way from St. Louis to Chicago to Detroit and continues on to Toronto and Montreal with Detroit right in the heart of it. Rail can solve some real problems. It can be economically efficient and contribute to sustainability and also an urban lifestyle, something our young people are looking for,” said Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder.

Wisconsin is also investing in passenger rail development. It has invested tens of millions of dollars in its Milwaukee-Chicago Hiawatha Corridor and seeks to invest more to increase the number of trains to 10 round trips and operate them at 90 mph. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation provides just $6.8 million per year to purchase service from Amtrak. Yet Amtrak spends $15 million per year on goods and services in Wisconsin to operate its trains. Rail travelers spend even more.

“We remain committed to the Hiawatha as an important part of the state's transportation system,” said Wisconsin Transportation Secretary Mark Gottlieb.

Missouri sees its small investment in 79 mph passenger rail service linking St. Louis to Kansas City via its state capital of Jefferson City as a building-block approach for further improvements in faster, more frequent trains on dedicated, passenger-only tracks someday.
“It would be a transformative step for Missouri, both in terms of the jobs created and in developing this mode of transportation between our state's two largest metropolitan areas and the cities along the route, including the state capital,” said Missouri's two-term Gov. Jay Nixon.

Of course, the Midwest's economic capital is Chicago. The Windy City's home state of Illinois is also the Midwest hub of passenger rail. So its state officials have experience with the benefits of train services and are eager to make improvements to passenger rail. This involves a nearly $2 billion program sponsored by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) of adding more trains and speeding them up – especially on the Chicago-Bloomington-Springfield-St. Louis Lincoln Corridor where trains are already hitting 110mph.

“None of this could have happened without the leadership of Gov. Bruce Rauner and his commitment to keeping Illinois the transportation hub of North America. When we are done, we will have strengthened the connections between our cities, institutions, schools and universities, tourist destinations and places of employment, just to name a few. This is just one piece of the larger mission Gov. Rauner has inspired at IDOT to build and maintain a modern transportation system that provides you, our customers, with multiple options to get to the places you need to go, whether to live, work or play,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn.

We at All Aboard Ohio hope this report has been informative and instructive as to the amazing investments Ohio's neighboring states and province of Ontario are making to passenger rail, and what Ohio's immediate passenger rail needs are at this time. We believe this is a conservative report with realistic, conservative suggestions on how to support the immediate needs of rail development in Ohio. We look forward to working with Ohio's policymakers on achieving progress now.

All Aboard Ohio
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