

Ohio Passenger Rail e-News

Volume 4 Issue 3

June 2013



Calendar of Events

LOCAL MEETINGS:

All meetings start at 10 A.M. on the second Saturday of each month:

CLEVELAND -- 10th-floor conference room, City Club Building, 850 Euclid Ave.

COLUMBUS -- Grandview Public Library, 1685 W. First Ave., Columbus.

TOLEDO -- Amtrak station, Toledo MLK Plaza, 415 Emerald Ave.

SUMMER EVENTS:

Aug. 8 from 5-9 pm: "TOD on Tap" Register at \$45 per person. (See page four)

Aug. 10 from 9 am-2 pm "All Aboard Ohio Summer Meeting & Family Outing" on the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad Register on-line at \$35 per person.

Status Report: Federal Funding for Intercity Passenger and High-Speed Rail Debated

Congress is expected to conduct debate later this summer on the reauthorization of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA). The current version of PRIIA was enacted in 2008 and is scheduled to expire in September of this year. In addition, FY2014 budgets are being debated in the House and Senate.

So this summer is the time to educate your Representatives and Senators about the purpose and need to improve intercity passenger and the business case to invest in high-speed rail.

The US House Appropriations Committee passed a bill that offers just \$950



million for Amtrak as part of the proposed FY 2014 transportation budget. This goes against Amtrak's request of \$2.7 billion, split between the Northeast Corridor, state services and long-distance trains. And this is less than the FY 2103 appropriation for Amtrak. Furthermore, the bill would ignore President Barack Obama's request to fund high-speed rail and improvements to conventional passenger rail throughout the country to

the tune of \$3.7 billion. The National Association of Railroad Passengers denounced the House proposal.

The Senate Appropriations Committee's markup of a funding bill for the 2014 fiscal year for

the departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development includes \$1.45 billion for Amtrak. Although Amtrak believes this number to be realistic and workable, it is only enough to maintain the status quo, but not enough funding to expand or modernize Amtrak's fleet. High-speed rail would get a miserly \$100 million in the Senate bill. That's better than the House's proposed \$0, but is still inadequate.

Foxx Confirmed as DOT Secretary

The U.S. Senate unanimously confirmed the appointment of former Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx as the 17th U.S. Secretary of Transportation. As mayor of Charlotte, Anthony Foxx worked to improve local public transportation. When nominating Foxx, President Obama

stated "Since Anthony took office, they have broken ground on a new street-car project that is going to bring modern electric tram service to the downtown area,...and they are extending the city's light rail system. All of that has not only helped to create new jobs, it has helped Char-

lotte become more attractive to business."

It is widely believed Secretary Foxx will be heavily involved in the Congressional debate on intercity passenger and high-speed rail. As noted, the two political parties are wide apart on this issue.

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Hoosier State Update Indiana DOT Studying Schedule Changes

The *Hoosier State* provides intercity passenger rail service between Chicago and Indianapolis. It runs on the four days each week that the *Cardinal* does not run allowing the Chicago to Indianapolis travel market to enjoy daily rail passenger service. The train also serves Lafayette on its route to Chicago. The route is threatened because of provisions in the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) requiring states to pay for the costs exceeding revenues on routes up to 750 miles.

The Indiana Department of Transportation hired CDM Smith, a transportation planning and engineering consultant, to evaluate what types of



The *Hoosier State*

schedule changes might make the service self-supporting. The \$100,000 study will evaluate three options for the *Hoosier State* in hopes of answering questions about the future of the service:

- ♦ Eliminate the *Hoosier State* service
- ♦ Fund the service at existing levels
- ♦ Fund the service with 79mph trains, 90% On-Time performance and increased frequency.

All Aboard Ohio seeks a fourth option for consideration:: Extend a daily 79mph train to Cincinnati via Indianapolis International Airport, Connersville, Oxford, Hamilton and Cincinnati Union Terminal. In a related effort, the Northeast Indiana Passenger Rail Association released a study of passenger rail service between Chicago and Columbus via Fort Wayne.

All Aboard Ohio Annual Meeting

More than 50 persons attended the All Aboard Ohio Annual Meeting, on May 11, which is regularly held in or near Columbus every May. This year's meeting was held at the Spaghetti Warehouse on West Broad Street.

All Aboard Ohio Executive Director Ken Prendergast gave a presentation on emerging opportunities for bringing new or expanded train services to cities in Ohio by giving them new or improved rail services to Chicago. Indiana is studying schedule changes for the *Hoosier State* (see article above) with potential for extending daily service to Cincinnati. For Columbus, a new study shows encouraging opportunities and numerous benefits for linking that city with fast trains to Chicago via Lima and Fort

Development of pedestrian-friendly "Complete Streets" using existing, flexible federal transportation funding and the improving prospects for passenger rail were on the agenda for All Aboard Ohio's Annual Meeting.

Wayne. The recently released study shows a dozen trains a day could link Chicago with the Midwest's third-largest city and the largest city in the country with no train service (Columbus), with travel as quick as 3

hours and 45 minutes for the 300-mile trip into downtown Chicago. More than 26,000 permanent jobs and \$6 billion worth of direct user benefits are forecast.

Nick Donohue, Policy Director for Transportation for America, which is based in Washington D.C., was the meeting's keynote speaker. A former Undersecretary of Transportation for the Commonwealth of Virginia, Mr. Donohue is well-versed in transportation policies and equity issues. Notably, he pointed out how transportation policies can just as easily immobilize low-income and disabled per-

sons through neglect, just as easily as good, flexible policies can provide access to opportunities for everyone.

He noted that 9 percent of Ohio households have no car. However, the Ohio Department of Transportation spends 99 percent of its transportation budget on highways by choice, not because laws or regulations require it too. This may have civil rights implications for Ohio. One way Ohio could expand its investments in multi-modal transportation is through "Complete Streets" which

is a design philosophy for including pedestrians, bikes, transit and cars in a roadway. Highway funding can be "flexed" to build infrastructure in a Complete Streets format.



Nick Donohue, T4America

City of Cleveland Applies for TIGER V Grant

New Pedestrian Bridge for Cleveland Lakefront Multimodal Station

The City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County jointly applied to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) for a

\$17 million TIGER V grant to help fund the Cleveland Downtown Lakefront Multimodal Station project. The project is intended to bridge significant rail and highway barriers that block pedestrian access between Cleveland's civic center and the Amtrak Station

and North Coast Harbor. The TIGER V grant application is part of a sweeping \$350 million plan with funding to develop economic development projects from Public Square to the Downtown Lakefront. These improvements will include a large, convention center-sized hotel, redesigned Public Square and the walkway linking the hotel and Global Center for Health Innovation and Convention Center with the Multimodal Transportation Center and the North Coast Harbor, home of several visitor destinations such as the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, Great Lakes Science Center and First Energy Stadium, home of the Cleveland Browns.

All Aboard Ohio is very supportive of the downtown plan put forth by County Executive Ed FitzGerald and Mayor Frank Jackson in general, and of the Multimodal Transportation Center project in particular. It will produce a foundation from which more projects can emerge.

All Aboard Ohio supports the city's plans and its federal TIGER V grant application to provide a Cleveland Lakefront Multimodal Transportation

Station as a stimulus for future development. Future spin-off development could include Amtrak station en-

hancements shown in red in the accompanying graphic.

This could lead to the expansion of Amtrak passenger rail service, including in daytime hours. Amtrak's popu-

lar Chicago-East Coast services have

seen their ridership grow 33 percent since 2000. Last year, 630,000 travelers rode Amtrak through Cleveland — the most rail passengers in more than four decades.

At Cleveland, an expanded station facility could include:

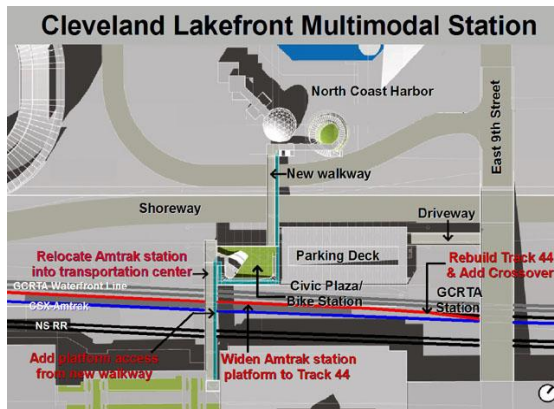
- ♦ Relocating the 35-year-old Amtrak station facility into the proposed parking complex below the Civic Plaza and Bike Station;
- ♦ Widening the existing platform to Track 44 for ADA compliance and to expand the station into a two-track facility;
- ♦ Refurbishing Track 44 and adding a cross-over track to the existing Amtrak track immediately east of the station;
- ♦ Adding a stairwell and elevator to link the city's proposed walkway with the wider station platform below; and
- ♦ Enhancing pedestrian linkages to Cleveland RTA's Waterfront Line stations at North Coast/East 9th Street and West Third Street, possibly via the Amtrak platform or a central concourse.

These future enhancements would result in a station facility that can process passengers from two tracks. All Aboard Ohio believes that providing two-track station facilities between Chicago-New York City is essential to improving rail traffic fluidity so that more freight and passenger traffic can be handled on this growing rail corridor.

Also, relocating Cleveland's Amtrak station inside the Multimodal Transportation Center and demolishing the aging Amtrak structure would avail a city-owned parcel that is well-positioned for redevelopment, especially with all of the transportation and pedestrian linkages that could soon be adjacent. Amtrak has pledged \$4.25 million for state-of-good-repair and ADA improvements at its Cleveland station.

Specifically, All Aboard Ohio urges the USDOT to award the TIGER V grant to the City of Cleveland after two prior attempts by the city failed in what is a highly popular and competitive program where funding requests far exceed funding availability. The National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) concurs and wrote a letter to the USDOT in support of Cleveland's application pointing out the potential for improved pedestrian access to the Amtrak Lakefront Station.

We believe this transportation center is needed to support expanded rail passenger service from Cleveland to Chicago, New York, Pittsburgh and eventually the 3-C cities in Ohio.



Cleveland Lakefront Multimodal Station



Amtrak Lakefront Station

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*Advocating for rail passenger and
public transit investments in Ohio.*

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Mai l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 1

Mai l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 2

Mai l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 3

Mai l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 4

Mai l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 5

All Aboard Ohio Summer Events

"TOD on Tap" Tour to Discuss Transit Oriented Development in Cleveland

TOD ON TAP

When: Thursday, August 8, 2013

SCHEDULE: start at Shaker Square:

5:00 p.m. -- Shaker Square, Zanzibar Soul Fusion, 13225 Shaker Sq (NE corner)
Speakers: Peter Rubin, President/CEO Coral Co., and Maribeth Feke, Director, Programming & Planning RTA.

6:30 p.m.-- Flats East Bank, Aloft Hotel Riveria BC/Lago, 1111 W.10th; Speaker: Harley Cohen, Owner's Rep., Harlan & Associates.

8:00 p.m.-- Uptown/UC, Constantino's Market (balcony), 11473 Euclid Ave; Speaker: Ari Maron, Partner, MRN Ltd.

Registration of \$45 per person includes one RTA Day Pass, and one beverage at each of the three stops (3 drinks total), plus hot/cold food and/or hors d'oeuvres at each stop.



Aloft Hotel at RTA Flats East Bank Station



Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railway

SUMMER FAMILY OUTING

When: Saturday, August 10, 2013

SCHEDULE: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Ride the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad train to Akron and back with a National Park Ranger providing narration. Board trains at the Rockside Road Station in Independence.

The train ride will be followed by lunch at Yours Truly restaurant near the Rockside Station with CVSR President Craig Tallman talking about the scenic railway.

Registration of \$35 per person includes the cost of the train ride and narrations.

There are plenty of things to see and do in Cleveland on August 9th so plan on making it an All Aboard Ohio weekend. All Aboard Ohio has arranged special room rates at the Courtyard by Marriott, Cleveland University Circle hotel. Please call the hotel direct to make your reservation for this fun filled weekend.