RAPID SPEED TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE (RSTI)
Chicago-Columbus-Pittsburgh Passenger Rail Project

October 24, 2019

RSTI - Quest for Better, Faster Connections
Creation of Rapid Speed Transportation Initiative

- $2.5-million study of rapid-speed technology options (traditional rail and hyperloop)
- Chicago-Columbus-Pittsburgh Corridor
- Two initial phases:
  - 1. Hyperloop Feasibility Study
  - 2. Components of Tier 1 EIS (*first-of-its-kind*)
- Future phase: Complete EIS
- Multiple public and private funding partners
RSTI Funding Sources

Current Funders:
• State of Ohio DOT
• City of Columbus
• City of Dublin
• City of Marysville
• Union County
• City of Lima
• MORPC

Components of Tier 1 EIS

• Task 1 – Project Management
• Task 2 – Preliminary Data Collection
• Task 3 – Purpose and Need Statements
• Task 4 – Route Alternatives
• Task 5 – Service Alternatives
• Task 6 – Infrastructure Investments
• Task 7 – Public Involvement
Hyperloop Feasibility Study

- **Task 1** – Visioning and Technology Application
- **Task 2** – Route Planning
- **Task 3** – Transportation Demand and Economic Benefit Analysis
- **Task 4** – Regulatory Framework and Implementation Strategy
- **Project Management, Stakeholder and Public Engagement**
FINDINGS: RIDERSHIP MARKET

2015 POPULATIONS

CHICAGO 8,524,670
FORT WAYNE 370,226
LIMA 106,240
COLUMBUS 2,301,465
PITTSBURGH 2,572,995

FINDINGS: RIDERSHIP MARKET

2040 POPULATIONS

CHICAGO 10,249,300
FORT WAYNE 408,694
LIMA 102,892
COLUMBUS 2,856,072
PITTSBURGH 2,911,667
FINDINGS: RIDERSHIP MARKET

CHICAGO: 4,710,024

FORT WAYNE: 236,670

LIMA: 73,022

COLUMBUS: 1,394,824

PITTSBURGH: 1,797,150

2040 EMPLOYMENT:

CHICAGO: 4,710,024

FORT WAYNE: 236,670

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PITTSBURGH: 1,797,150

2040 EMPLOYMENT:
PASSENGER RAIL FINDINGS

Study Deliverables

- Existing conditions report
- Draft Purpose and Need Statement
- Route alternatives report
- Public involvement strategy
**Existing Conditions Findings**

- Existing transportation options do not meet corridor travel needs
- Existing transportation options are not consistently convenient or dependable
- Safety is a concern for existing vehicle travel
- Existing transportation options have relatively high environmental impacts
- Additional transportation choices increase economic competitiveness

**Route Alternatives**

- [Map of Route Alternatives]
Route Alternatives Screening Criteria

- Track Class/Speed
- Train Volumes
- Track Capacity
- Route Circuity
- Corridor Communities & Land Use
- Ownership
- Number of at-grade crossings
- Number of bridge, underpass, or tunnel structures
- ROW Width
- Signaling

Station Criteria

- Local preference
- Former Station Location
- Tangent track
- Adjacent land use
- Distance between stations
- Population center and/or access to connecting infrastructure
- Overall travel time
Draft Purpose & Need Statement

• Provide an alternative choice to private auto and air service for intercity passenger travel
• Support economic competitiveness and economic development, particularly for small cities along the corridor
• Provide convenient, reliable travel access to station city centers
• Provide attractive travel times competitive with auto travel
• Improve safety of intercity travel between corridor cities
• Maintain cost-effectiveness by maximizing use of existing rail infrastructure

Potential Station Locations

• Following slides summarize all station locations considered in the study
• MORPC held work sessions with the following study funders to review station locations and alignment alternatives:
  • Columbus
  • Dublin
  • Marysville
  • Kenton
  • Lima
• Due to funding limits, only communities who contributed funds to the study were included in work sessions for this phase of the study
Station Location - Lima

The City of Lima has preserved their historic passenger rail station by occupying it with other uses. The Utilities Department currently uses the station. The City indicates that this is their preferred facility for a passenger rail station. The station is located in central Lima and has approximately 600 feet of tangent track adjacent to it.

Potential Station Locations – Kenton

Two potential station locations were identified in Kenton: a west location and a central location.
Potential Station – Kenton West

The west location has over 1,000 feet of tangent track and is immediately west of an Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) facility. An access road to the station would need to be built, but perhaps the BMV driveway could be shared. There may also be potential to share parking with the BMV.

Potential Station – Kenton Central

The central location is in downtown Kenton. There is close to 500 feet of tangent track, although a small segment of the track may need to be straightened. There is adequate space for a facility and parking, however the property may need to be acquired from a private owner.
Two potential station locations were identified in Marysville: a west location and a south location.

Potential Station – Marysville West

The west location has close to 500 feet of tangent track, but may require some curve straightening. There appears to be sufficient space for a station and it is adjacent to an underutilized parking lot. The property may need to be acquired from a private owner. This site is located in a potentially walkable section of Marysville and may be appropriate for transit-oriented development.
**Potential Station – Maryville South**

The Marysville South location has over 1,000 feet of tangent track. The property appears to currently be used for agricultural purposes and may need to be acquired from a private owner. The site has sufficient space for a station, platforms, and parking. It is adjacent to a Walmart Supercenter.

**Potential Station Location - Dublin**

One potential location was identified in Dublin. The site is currently agricultural land and would likely need to be acquired from a private owner. There is over 1,000 feet of tangent track as well as sufficient space for a station, platforms, and parking. The location has relatively easy access to Route 33 and I-270. It is also relatively near to OhioHealth Dublin and to Northwest Columbus destinations.
Potential Station Locations - Columbus

Three potential locations were identified for a station in Columbus: in the Franklinton neighborhood, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, and at the Columbus International Airport. We will keep all 3 as potential stations, with the convention center location being a “for sure” location.

Potential Station – Franklinton (Columbus)

Franklinton was identified by stakeholders as a neighborhood with development potential, which might generate ridership for a rail station. The site identified abuts I-670 and has over 1,000 feet of tangent track, as well as adequate space for a station, platforms, and parking. The site is immediately north of a Central Ohio Transit Authority facility and parking lot. Road access to the station would need to be created. This location can only be accessed on the Norfolk Southern Buckeye Subdivision ROW.
Potential Station – Columbus Convention Center

The Convention Center in downtown Columbus would be an ideal location to connect to Convention Center activities and the central business district. The ROW is below grade in this area, meaning there may be special engineering and siting considerations for the station and platforms. There may be limited ability to build new parking, however existing parking garages are nearby. There is about 800 feet of tangent track and it could be accessed by either the Norfolk Southern or CSX ROWs identified as possible route alignments.

Potential Location – Columbus International Airport

The Columbus International Airport as a station site could provide a convenient connection for airport travelers. There is over 1,000 feet of tangent track, as well as sufficient space for a station and platforms. The property may need to be acquired from a private owner. To serve airport passengers, it may be necessary for a shuttle service to ferry riders between the station and the airport.
PASSENGER RAIL NEXT STEPS

- Public meetings
- Secure funding to complete the environmental studies necessary for the federal construction approval process
- Engage and secure the support of communities east of Columbus
- Develop a strategy with other surrounding states to secure regulatory guidance

HYPERLOOP NEXT STEPS

- Public meetings
- VHO certification segment – R&D collaboration opportunity
- Create a travel demand advisory panel (public agencies, academic institutions, VHO)
- Advance regulatory framework with appropriate agencies
- Continue to facilitate collaboration