

NEWS

OHIO RAIL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Passenger Rail Grant Awarded to ORDC *FRA Grant Advances Route Analysis of 3-C Corridor*

(Columbus) – The Federal Railroad Administration has awarded a \$62,500 grant to the Ohio Rail Development Commission.

“We’re excited about being selected for this grant by the FRA”, says ORDC Executive Director Matt Dietrich. “It demonstrates the validation of Ohio’s passenger rail plans at the Federal level and what we hope is the beginning of Federal resources to advance these plans.”

Description: Ohio has contracted with Amtrak to assess the feasibility of initiating a start-up service of two round trips per day between Cleveland and Columbus and possibly to Cincinnati (which together define the “3C” corridor). The planning project would complement the Amtrak assessment and advance the analysis of alternative 3C routes and station locations that will most effectively serve the corridor - both in the short-term and the long-term. The tasks include: program management, coordination with Amtrak and oversight of Amtrak train operations analysis; drafting purpose and need; and long term alternative route analysis.

Benefits: The planning objectives are to support the state initiative for start-up service in the short term by conducting short-term/long-term planning analysis of 3C corridor requirements. This will help to align any short-term actions with the long-term needs, planning and environmental documentation. It is expected that the project would:

- 1.) *Support a State-supported Amtrak startup service;*
- 2.) *Advance the conceptual engineering and analysis of alternative routes and station sites and facilities; and*
- 3.) *Clarify a long-term corridor development strategy.*

The awarding of the FRA grant follows the request earlier this year by Governor Ted Strickland to Amtrak CEO Alex Kummant to begin a ridership and revenue study of possible start-up service in the 3-C Corridor. The corridor is the most densely-populated in Ohio with almost 60-percent of the state's population, but has not seen passenger rail service since 1971.

(The Ohio Rail Development Commission is an independent agency operating within the Ohio Department of Transportation. ORDC is responsible for economic development through the improvement and expansion of passenger and freight rail services and railroad grade crossing safety. For more information about what ORDC does for Ohio, visit our website at <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/ohiorail/>)