



## TMACOG Passenger Rail Committee Agenda & Notes – May 2018

Thursday, May 17, 2018, 2:30 p.m.

### Welcome and introductions – Tim Porter, Committee Chair

#### 1. **A2TC Study – Ann Arbor to Traverse City** – *Next steps for adding Toledo to the study* – Tim Porter/Jerry Wicks/All Attendees

The committee discussed what needs to happen next to use the FY2018 \$10,000 seed money toward the A2TC project study.

- TMACOG will need to compose a *Memorandum of Understanding* between TMACOG and the A2TC group to make sure the money is used for the proper purpose. TMACOG staff will talk to A2TC to discuss the needed memorandum, and to also discuss details of the study and what procedures need to be followed.
- We will still need an additional \$17,500 to add Toledo to the study. Committee members and TMACOG staff will ask for additional funds from the City of Toledo, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, Lucas County, University of Toledo, and private companies such as ProMedica. If any other committee members have ideas for who else to include, or contacts with other entities who may be able to donate, please contact [streiffert@tmacog.org](mailto:streiffert@tmacog.org).
- Other discussion on the study included the fact that there are 90,000 students on the A2TC route in Michigan and the Toledo connection would add more students. Tourists travelling to upper Michigan would also be users of the service.
- The probable route in Toledo would be to connect the Toledo Train Station via Norfolk Southern with the Ann Arbor Railroad, which then runs northwest to Ann Arbor. The exact connection location and route would need to be determined.

Staff will keep the committee apprised of progress on the A2TC study and Toledo's involvement.

#### 2. **ORDC 2018 Update to the Ohio Rail Plan** – *Review regional passenger rail projects to be included* – Roger Streiffert/All Attendees

Matt Dietrich, executive director of the ORDC, along with others met at TMACOG a few weeks ago to announce plans to update the Ohio Rail Plan, originally completed in 2010. The ORDC will be looking for input for the plan from various stakeholders including members of TMACOG's Passenger Rail and Freight Advisory Committees.

For the May 17 meeting, TMACOG staff supplied the committee with a link to the 2010 plan, the Passenger Rail Policy Brief from the current TMACOG Legislative Agenda, and passenger rail information, policies, and projects from the TMACOG



2045 Plan. The plan is for staff to condense this information into a list of projects, policies and other information to be submitted to the ORDC. Staff will then ask for additions and revisions from the committee before submitting. Your input is very valuable and greatly appreciated.

In a related discussion, the Ohio Hub plan, though presently dormant, is still the plan to follow for passenger rail development in Ohio, and the Midwest Regional Plan is the guide for regional development. Look for follow-up emails on the Ohio Rail Plan update.

**3. Other Business as Time Allows – *Projects/announcements/news/events/etc.* – All Attendees**

Tony Reams, former TMACOG President and newly appointed commissioner with the ORDC, attended the meeting and had some good information for the committee, including:

- It is important that a project, such as A2TC, can contribute to an overall regional vision in order to attract the attention of those civic leaders who could be a champion for the project.
- These projects should fit into a big picture and needs to provide measurable benefits to the city or to the region. It is important to be able to provide data that demonstrates the economic value of the project.
- Passenger rail projects are particularly difficult because they need to run on rails owned by freight railroads, who do not need or want the passenger business. Short-line railroads are more likely to allow passenger trains on their routes because they can benefit financially from allowing the use of their lines.

Lastly, Toledo Train Day 2018 was considered a great success with a very good turnout. Plans are underway for Train Day 2019.

**Meeting Adjourned**

Preliminary Schedule of 2018 Passenger Rail Committee Meetings:

Thursday, August 16, 2018, 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 15, 2018, 2:30 p.m.

Other meetings can be scheduled as needed