



Ohio Rail Development Commission Fiscal Year 2008 Federal Appropriations Request

The Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) has submitted a funding request through and with the cooperation of Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur and Congressman Tim Ryan to advance the planning and environmental reviews for three Ohio Hub corridors: Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati; Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit; and Cleveland-Pittsburgh. The following Ohio Hub project information was provided by ORDC to both Congresswoman Kaptur and Congressman Ryan.

Name of Project: Ohio Hub Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement - Phase 1

Name of Requesting Organization: Ohio Rail Development Commission

Physical Location of Project: The Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) have studied the feasibility of expanding transportation capacity by improving the railroad system for both passenger and freight trains. These efforts have resulted in the proposed Ohio Hub Passenger and Freight Rail System Plan. The Ohio Hub Plan involves the development of nine intercity-interstate passenger and freight rail corridors including:

Ohio Hub - Phase 1:

1. Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati
2. Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit
3. Cleveland-Pittsburgh

Ohio Hub: Later Phases:

4. Cleveland-Toledo-Chicago
5. Columbus-Lima-Chicago
6. Cincinnati-Indianapolis-Chicago
7. Columbus-Toledo
8. Columbus-Pittsburgh
9. Cleveland-Erie-Buffalo-Toronto

The 1,780-mile interstate railroad system will serve over 33 million people in Ohio and the surrounding region, which includes five neighboring states and southern Ontario, Canada. The 53 passenger rail stations will be located in downtowns, in suburbs near highways, and adjacent to major international airports. Feeder buses will integrate the rail service with smaller communities and college towns. Frequent, reliable, modern, and comfortable passenger trains will offer same-day round-trip service throughout the region, and when the system is connected to other developing rail corridors, the Ohio Hub becomes a critical link in a national network serving 140 million people in the Midwest, Northeast, and Canada, or nearly half of the U.S. population.

Supporting Organizations (if applicable): Planning for the Ohio Hub Passenger and Freight Rail System is an ongoing, cooperative and collaborative effort. Transportation agencies from Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania and New York, along with Amtrak and VIA Rail contributed to the feasibility planning for the Ohio Hub System. Norfolk Southern, CSX and Canadian National railroads also provided critical input into the planning process.

Project Description (250 words or less): Federal funding will be used to advance the planning and environmental reviews for three Ohio Hub Corridors: Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati; Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit; and Cleveland-Pittsburgh. As funding permits, the geographic scope may expand to include additional Ohio Hub corridors. The goal is to advance the corridors through the required steps under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This will resolve decisions regarding project location, capital improvements, community priorities, and environmental impacts, and will result in a *Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement* (PEIS) that will record a list of project decisions to be approved by the Federal Railroad Administration. The Ohio Hub PEIS - Phase 1 will:

1. Provide federal recognition of the Ohio Hub as “a funding-ready program of capacity improvement projects;”
2. Strengthen Ohio’s partnership with the freight railroads by working to identify “system wide” improvements that will increase transportation capacity for growing volumes of freight while removing railroad bottlenecks, improving fluidity, and having a positive affect on highway capacity, shipping rates, and economic development;
3. Identify critical railroad rights-of-way and facilities that must be preserved for Ohio’s future long-term railroad capacity needs;
4. Evaluate the capital and operating needs for an Ohio Hub passenger rail “start-up” service;
5. Propose a project funding framework that will capture public and private transportation funds currently being spent on Ohio highway and railroad improvements, which will be leveraged to attract additional federal funds for construction when a federal rail funding program is finally put in place; and
6. Strengthen interstate and local partnerships as state and local agencies and transit authorities work to share technical information, coordinate planning, and interconnect projects that offer joint-development potential.

Amount requested and Budget: \$5 million for Fiscal Year 2008.

Budget: The total cost for the Ohio Hub Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement – Phase 1 is \$6.25 million. The break-down for the Ohio Hub PEIS – Phase 1 Budget is as follows:

▪ Program Management:	\$525,000
▪ Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement - Phase 1 Work Plan:	\$150,000
▪ Public Involvement and Agency Coordination:	\$1,000,000
▪ Strategic Analysis of Freight Railroad Network:	\$525,000
▪ Alternatives Development and Planning:	\$475,000
▪ Alternatives Analysis - Ridership and Revenue Forecasts	\$425,000
▪ Conceptual Engineering – Route and Station Location Studies:	\$575,000
▪ Ohio Hub Start-up Service - Operating and Capital Analysis:	\$200,000
▪ Initial GIS and Geospatial Data Collection and Mapping:	\$275,000
▪ Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences:	\$1,425,000
▪ Ohio Hub Phase 1 and System-wide Project Funding Framework:	\$250,000
▪ Draft and Final PEIS Documentation and Record of Decision:	<u>\$400,000</u>
TOTAL FY 2008 PROJECT BUDGET	<u>\$6,250,000</u>

Account Request: Title 49, Section 26101 Federal Railroad Administration High Speed Rail Corridor Planning.

Sources of matching funds (please remember that you are more likely to be funded if you request no more than 50 percent of the total cost of the project). The Ohio Rail Development Commission is working to secure the local matching funds. The sources of the local funding include Ohio Rail Development Commission General Revenue Funds, Ohio Department of Transportation State Planning and Research Funds, Local Transportation Planning Funds, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funds. Other funding mechanisms include: local investment for station location and station-area land use planning and in-kind services provided by Amtrak and other private sector partners including possible investments by the freight railroads.

To date, state funds account for 35% or \$284,000 of the total costs of the Ohio Hub feasibility study. Additionally, ORDC and ODOT invest in a Highway/Railroad Grade Separation Program and nearly 30 projects are located on critical passenger and freight rail corridors. State and local funding account for approximately 45% of the total cost of this \$200 million program.

The minimum amount in federal funds needed to have the project/program move ahead. As the sign-off federal agency, the Federal Railroad Administration will not agree to initiate the PEIS process without a significant commitment of the required funding. At a minimum, \$3 million in federal funds will be needed to initiate the Ohio Hub PEIS planning and project development process.

If applicable, does the project have the support of state/local elected officials (especially for infrastructure projects)? Please identify and include resolutions of support if available.

Yes, the Ohio Hub System Plan has tremendous state-wide support. When it was publicly released in 2005, ORDC along with Ohio's regional planning commissions and metropolitan planning organizations hosted public and agency outreach meetings in 10 Ohio cities. At every meeting the reaction to the proposed Ohio Hub was nearly universally supportive.

The Ohio Senate-126th General Assembly, with a vote of 33-0 passed Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 30 on May 24, 2006, *“Requesting the support of the Ohio Congressional delegation for federal funding for a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement for the Ohio Hub Plan, increasing passenger and freight rail capacity in Ohio.*

To date, 22 Ohio municipalities and agencies have sent letters or passed resolutions *“to request that the Ohio Rail Development Commission pursue completion of a Tier 1 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement on all feasible passenger rail corridors in Ohio.”*

Support has been received from the City of Cincinnati, City of Cleveland, City of Columbus, City of Dayton, City of Lima, City of Toledo, Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, Cuyahoga County Commissioners, Lorain County Commissioners, City of Galion, City of Shaker Heights, City of Shelby, City of Sylvania, City of Vermilion, Monroe County Planning Commission, Ohio Environmental Council, and the Midwest Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments. Letters of support have also been received from NS and CSX railroads and the Ohio Contractors Association.

Has the project received federal funding in the past? If so, please specify amount, source, year, etc. To date, a total of \$805,000 state and federal funds have been expended and/or committed to the Ohio Hub feasibility study phase. The Federal share of this has been provided through the State Departments of Transportation - State Planning and Research Programs. Indiana, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania have participated in the planning and have contributed a share of Federal and State dollars. The following identifies only the federal funding share to date:

FY 2002:	Ohio DOT State Planning and Research Program:	\$160,000
FY 2002:	Michigan DOT State Planning and Research Program:	\$32,000
FY 2006:	Ohio DOT State Planning and Research Program:	\$220,000
FY 2006:	Indian DOT State Planning and Research Program:	\$32,000
FY 2007:	Ohio DOT State Planning and Research Program:	<u>\$77,000</u>
	TOTAL Federal Funding Share to Date	\$521,000

What are the anticipated benefits of the project (250 words or less). The *Ohio Hub Passenger and Freight Rail Plan* breaks from the long-standing Amtrak model and suggests a policy that invests public dollars in improving the railroad system to achieve public benefits and generate economic development activity. The Ohio Hub rail system will provide additional capacity for freight and will keep the railroads and freeways fluid, improve railroad efficiency, promote a more balanced transportation network, and reduce emissions and U.S. dependency on expensive imported oil. In an environment of rising oil prices and urgent concerns over global warming and air quality, the Ohio Hub System will offer an energy efficient, emissions efficient, and cost effective alternative to air and automobile travel. Railroad operations are two to three times more fuel efficient than cars and trucks and three to four times more fuel efficient than air.

The benefit to cost analysis methods, developed and accepted by the USDOT-FRA, estimate nearly \$9 billion in economic impacts from constructing a four corridor, 860 mile, \$4.9 billion system. The benefit cost ratio is substantial (1.8) reflecting the fact that the Ohio Hub region provides an exceptional environment for developing the nation's regional rail system. The *Ohio Hub Economic Impact Study* concludes that the long-term benefits are substantial. In addition to the 6,600 construction jobs the report highlights the long-term economic impacts:

- The Ohio Hub will create 16,700 permanent jobs which is equivalent to more than 500,000 person years of work over 30 years;
- The project will raise the region's income by over \$1 billion over the life of the project;
- The project will increase the average annual household income in the region by at least \$90.
- The Ohio Hub will have the affect of increasing land values and creating the potential for communities to develop new retail, office and residential projects near the Ohio Hub stations. The Ohio Hub will generate more than \$3 billion dollars of development activity near the passenger rail stations.
- The Ohio Hub will increase tourism and will generate 320 thousand new overnight trips and create an \$80 million impact per year on Ohio's tourism industry.

Identify the targeted population who will be served by this initiative. The Ohio Hub intercity/interstate passenger rail network will serve 33 million people in Ohio and the surrounding region, including cities in six states and southern Ontario, Canada. The Ohio Hub System along with the proposed 3,000-mile, nine state Midwest Regional Rail System is forecast to carry 23 million passengers per year, the same number of passengers that currently ride Amtrak's entire nationwide network. The Ohio Hub will offer competitive fares to destinations throughout the region.

Full contact information (address, email, telephone numbers, including cells) of two members of the requesting organization who can answer questions on the project.

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Will this request be submitted to any other U.S. Representatives or U.S. Senators for consideration? If so, please specify. Statewide Congressional support and co-sponsorship is being sought for this request.

Does your organization have any financial issues - now or in the foreseeable future- that could place the organization's operation at risk of continuing its programs and services, or would jeopardize the availability of the local match? No. The Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) is an independent state agency within the Ohio Department of Transportation.