



## **TMACOG Passenger Rail Committee Agenda & Notes – August 2019**

Thursday, August 29, 2019, 3:30 p.m.

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

- 1. 2019-20 TMACOG Transportation Legislative Agenda** – *Quick look at the final document* – Roger Streiffert, TMACOG

The committee reviewed the final document, notably the passenger rail policy brief, and agreed that the document contained the information suggested by the committee in 2018. Some of the language used in the document will be used by staff for the 2045 Plan passenger rail project and policy descriptions.

- 2. 2045 Plan 2020 Update Passenger Rail Projects** – *Approve final list of projects, initiatives, policies* – Roger Streiffert/All Attendees

The committee reviewed and discussed a final list of projects and initiatives to be submitted to the 2045 Plan 2020 Update task force for possible inclusion in the plan. Below is a prioritized (and abbreviated) list of the projects and initiatives:

1. Re-establish Toledo to Detroit passenger rail service
  2. Fund a feasibility study for a new Maumee River passenger/freight bridge
  3. Fund a feasibility study for passenger rail service connecting Toledo to Columbus
  4. Reconnect Adrian & Blissfield RR to Norfolk Southern near Ottawa Lake, MI
  5. Upgrade MLK Plaza infrastructure including renovations to the B&B building
  6. Fund a feasibility study for connecting Toledo to Fort Wayne by passenger rail
  7. Fund a feasibility study for connecting the Toledo area with light rail, street cars, or bus rapid transit (possibly update the regional circulator study from 2005)
1. Initiative: Support the implementation of a statewide passenger rail system connecting Toledo, Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati.

Staff dropped any reference to the 2004 Ohio Hub plan from the initiative because the study is now 15 years old and would need to be updated before statewide rail could once again be considered.

A list of four passenger rail policies was also shared with the attendees. Staff will complete some minor revisions to the policies and will send it out to all committee members for any further revisions or additions. The full list of projects will also be sent for any further revisions or additions. The final list will be submitted to the 2045 task force in September.

- 3. Draft Toledo-Detroit Ridership Feasibility Study** – *Review latest developments and next steps* – Roger Streiffert/All Attendees

The committee discussed the latest developments in the Toledo-Detroit passenger rail study. Here are some important points from the conversation:

- The next phase of the study, Phase 2A Tier 1 EIS, has a cost of \$300,000. A scope of work to be included was released by TEMS in June 2019.
- After a meeting with the Toledo-Lucas Co. Port Authority, Councilman Delaney determined that a meeting with CSX Railroad should take place before Phase 2, to get their thoughts on the plan and the possibilities of using their right-of-way.
- At the Monroe Co. meeting for the rail plan it was mentioned that Amtrak may be interested in reconnecting Detroit To Toledo with Amtrak service.
- A plan was made to present the next phase to Toledo City Council but has been put on hold until more information can be gathered, more backing for the plan from government entities and the private sector can be obtained, and a meeting with CSX takes place.
- Staff from SEMCOG (Southeast Michigan Council of Governments) believe that a direct connection to Detroit and not Detroit Metro is a more feasible plan and is supported by SEMCOG.
- MDOT would still like to establish a station at Detroit Metro on their east-west route (served by Amtrak) between Detroit and Ann Arbor. Riders from Toledo would travel to a connection just west of Detroit and then west to Detroit Metro.
- Michigan Flyer bus service between Toledo and Detroit Metro (in the planning stage) may be an alternative to direct passenger rail to the airport from Toledo.
- The next important steps are to meet with CSX, Amtrak, SEMCOG, and the City of Detroit to determine a cohesive plan forward.

**4. 2019 Toledo Passenger Rail Forum – *Ideas for possible speakers; other plans for the event* – Tim Porter, Committee Chair**

Tim Porter updated the attendees on planning efforts for the forum which is tentatively scheduled for Monday, October 21, at MLK Plaza. At meeting time, several possible key note speakers have yet to reply. Tim will keep us updated.

**5. Other Topics or Announcements – *Other items of interest as time allows* – All Attendees**

As discussed at the 2019 Michigan Rail Conference, Amtrak is considering extending Wolverine line rail service east from Chicago and Detroit to Toronto, Ontario.

**Meeting Adjourned**

Schedule of 2019 Passenger Rail Committee Meetings:  
Thursday, November 14, 2019, 2:30 p.m. (Revised)

Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed.