



TMACOG Passenger Rail Committee Agenda & Notes – February 2020

Thursday, February 20, 2020, 2:30 p.m.

Welcome and introductions – Tim Porter, Committee Chair

- 1. TMACOG Passenger Rail Planning AWP – Action Item** – *Review and approve the passenger rail planning annual work program for fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020)* – Roger Streiffert, TMACOG/Tim Porter

The TMACOG annual work program for passenger rail planning for FY 2021 was reviewed and approved by the committee. Work products include revising the passenger rail content of the TMACOG Transportation Legislative Agenda, continue to work on the Toledo to Detroit connection project, and work to move other passenger rail projects and initiatives forward from the 2020 update to the 2045 transportation plan.

- 2. Updates to the Committee on Various Topics** – *Revamping the TMACOG website/Metroparks River Walk project/Toledo-Detroit passenger rail connection plan* – Roger Streiffert

TMACOG is completely revising the agency website by the summer of 2020, including the passenger rail planning and committee information. Please pass along ideas you may have on content or links that should be included to TMACOG staff.

TMACOG is partnering with Metroparks Toledo, ConneCToledo, and others to submit a BUILD grant application to fund a river walk project on both sides of the Maumee River between the Anthony Wayne Bridge and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge. If this project is built it could become a major draw for downtown Toledo and could be a key destination on a passenger rail route.

As of this committee meeting, there was no new updates on the Toledo to Detroit passenger rail connection project. However, it now looks like Toledo councilman Christopher Delaney is moving the project forward in 2020 and is hoping to get a Federal Railroad Administration grant to pay for some of the costs related to the next phases of the study. More details to follow as we gain additional information.

- 3. Connecting the Region's Universities by Passenger Rail** – *Using rail to connect the U.T., BGSU, Michigan, others* – Jerry Wicks, OHERN

Jerry Wicks talked about the past plan to connect various universities in Ohio and Michigan by passenger rail. The Technology Corridor plan used existing rail lines to connect BGSU, Owens, UT Scott Park, UT, and U. of Michigan. This plan could be reborn and revised to use rail or light rail to connect regional campuses. Any plan to construct commuter or light rail in the region should have connections to area



colleges and universities. We will look further at a possible knowledge corridor at future meetings. Jerry also shared information on a mapping and cost comparison project comparing travel by train and travel by auto being conducted by students at BGSU. Jerry can share project results at a future meeting.

4. Committee Goals/Plans/Projects for 2020 – *What does the committee want to accomplish this year?* – Roger Streiffert/All Attendees

Below are ideas on what the committee would like to work on in 2020 and beyond:

- Update passenger rail page for the TMACOG Legislative Agenda by Sept. 2020.
- Work to move the Toledo to Detroit connection project forward to next phase.
- Plan for a feasibility study for a connection between Toledo and Columbus via Bowling Green and Dunkirk junction.
- Promote the reconnection of the Adrian & Blissfield Railroad to Norfolk Southern near Ottawa Lake, MI.
- Look at updating the Technology Corridor plan to connect regional campuses.
- Look at a possible feasibility study for a new Maumee River rail crossing.
- Develop a plan for a regional rail connector between downtown Toledo and outlying areas.
- Look to move forward other projects on the TMACOG 2045 Plan – Update 2020.

If you have ideas on additional projects or activities, please contact TMACOG staff.

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

Tim Porter reported that there will not be a NOPRA passenger rail forum this year, but he has started planning for a February 2021 forum. If you have ideas for possible topics or speakers, please contact Tim Porter.

Bill Gill reported that planning for Train Day Toledo 2020 (Saturday, May 9) is moving forward on schedule.

Kim Dunham, the new director at TARTA, stopped by at the end of the meeting and talked about some of her plans and goals for transit in the region. She has strong knowledge and is very enthusiastic about passenger rail as an efficient and economically viable public transit mode.

The question was brought forth about whether the Port Authority plans to make other needed improvements and maintenance to MLK Plaza beyond the plan to upgrade the B&B building. Staff will follow-up on this question.

Meeting Adjourned



Schedule of 2020 Passenger Rail Committee Meetings:

Thursday, February 20, 2020, 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 21, 2020, 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, August 20, 2020, 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 19, 2020, 2:30 p.m.

Additional meetings scheduled as needed.