

# FRA Corridor Identification and Development Program

**Award:** \$500,000; no match required

**Submission:** Monday, March 27, 2023

**Award Announcement:** September/October 2023 (expected)

The Corridor ID Program, established by the IIJA/BIL, is intended to coordinate planning and development activities for potential new or enhanced passenger rail service across the nation. It has three steps to usher a passenger rail corridor towards implementation:

<p><b>Step 1</b> Initiation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop scope, schedule, cost estimate for Step 2</li> <li>•Capacity-building to deliver subsequent Steps</li> <li>•<b>\$500,000 award, <u>no match</u>, unspent funds carry forward</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 2</b> Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Prepare a Service Development Plan (SDP)</li> <li>•Details route, stations, service, capital projects, financial plan</li> <li>•<b>Cost and award determined in Step 1; 10% match (Amtrak will cover half of state match)</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Step 3</b> Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Preliminary engineering, environmental review (NEPA)</li> <li>•Prepares projects for design, construction; route for service</li> <li>•<b>Cost and award determined in Step 2; 20% match</b></li> </ul>

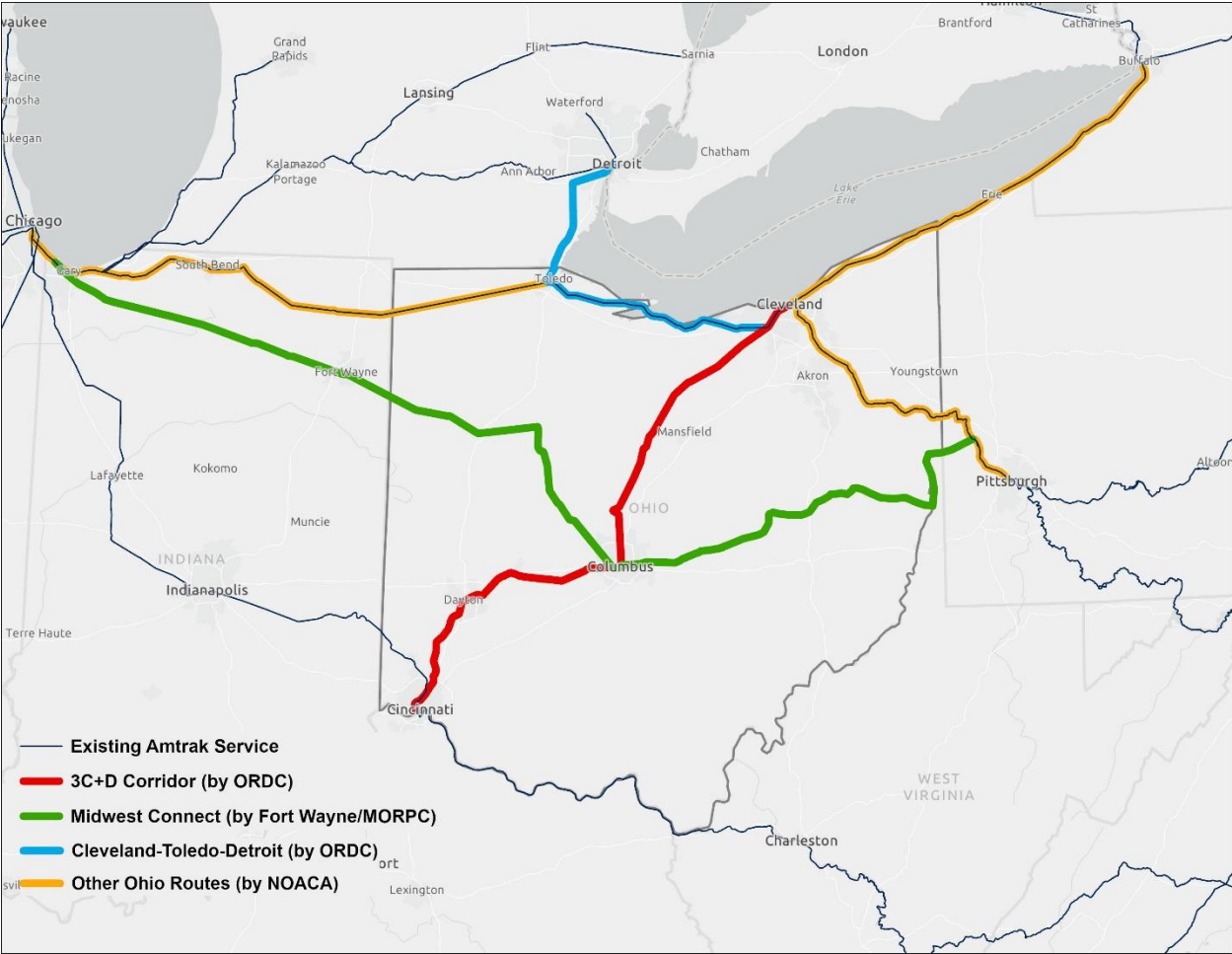
**Once a grantee is in the program, they no longer compete for subsequent Steps.** Step 2 and Step 3 funding is awarded following satisfactory completion of the previous step (as determined by FRA). Corridors which complete Step 3 will have their capital projects placed in a project pipeline, which establishes the Federal priority for funding construction and implementation. Other, existing FRA programs are available to assist in construction and service introduction.

Eligible Applicants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•State(s)</li> <li>•Regional planning organizations</li> <li>•Subdivisions of states</li> <li>•Amtrak</li> <li>•Passenger rail authorities</li> <li>•Indian tribes</li> </ul>

Submission Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•<b>Corridor Narrative</b> (Max 15 pages)</li> <li>•Applicant and route eligibility</li> <li>•Past or current work/funding</li> <li>•Basic route and service characteristics</li> <li>•Satisfies evaluation criteria</li> <li>•Aligns with USDOT strategic goals</li> </ul>



# Corridor ID Program Passenger Rail Applications in Ohio



<p><b>3C+D Corridor</b> <i>State Submission</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nearly \$130 million estimated annual economic impact</li> <li>400,000-800,000 annual ridership (3-5 daily round trips)</li> <li>One of the best ridership-to-cost ratios in Amtrak ConnectsUS plan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Midwest Connect</b> <i>MORPC/Ft Wayne Submission</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>200,000-400,000 annual ridership (six daily round trips)</li> <li>Initial planning under Rapid Speed Transportation Initiative (RSTI)</li> <li>Pending CRISI grant application for Central Ohio portion</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cleveland-Toledo-Detroit</b> <i>State Submission</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct service from Cleveland to Detroit via Toledo</li> <li>Connections with existing routes in Michigan and Ontario</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Routes</b> <i>NOACA Submission</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-located with existing routes between Toledo and Cleveland (<i>Lake Shore Limited, Capital Limited</i>)</li> <li>New, dedicated routes to Chicago, Buffalo, and Pittsburgh</li> </ul>

## ***Benefits***

The Corridor ID program will provide a unique opportunity to resolve the planning and project prioritization issues needed to define a long-term investment program for these corridors of national significance. This process will help quantify benefits for safety, the economy, sustainability, and equity.

### *Safety*

The national rail fatality rate is roughly 17 times lower than highway fatalities on a passenger-mile basis. Shifting some passenger travel to rail will reduce congestion on roadways and reduce the risk of crashes from distracted driving and severe weather events.

Planning activities will include a comprehensive analysis of any capital and operational improvements needed to ensure safe travel for all forms of rail traffic and any road users crossing the rail network.

Infrastructure upgrades will be identified and designed in later steps of the program. These improvements may include rail-side state of good repair and upgrades such as wyes, sidings, additional mainline, and signals. Highway-related projects may include improved crossing signals and gates and constructing grade-separated crossings. Operational upgrades (e.g., scheduling, maintenance cycles, and workforce training) will be coordinated with the FRA, host railroads, and other federal and state safety regulators.

### *Economy*

Providing fast, reliable and accessible transportation connections between varied economies of scale will make business, personal, and tourist travel more efficient and will enhance economic competitiveness along the corridors. The benefits extend beyond the large urban nodes as access to and from rural areas – bolstering tourism and strengthening connections to regional economies – will be prioritized.

Amtrak's *Connects US* corridor vision estimated an annual economic impact of the 3C&D corridor at \$130M with \$2.6B in economic activity from capital investments. For the Cleveland-Detroit route, this was estimated at nearly \$100M and \$4.5B, respectively. Job creation and retention is a key focus as well. A 2013 Business Case Study for the Chicago to Columbus rail corridor estimated that construction and ongoing operations and maintenance of the rail service were estimated to spur the creation of 12,000 construction jobs and 26,000 permanent jobs over 30 years.

A central goal of this project is to ensure that the state's freight network is not negatively impacted by the introduction of passenger rail service. The intent is enhance, to the extent possible, the freight service that is vital to our manufacturing and agricultural sectors. The Corridor ID Program will allow the evaluation of needed operational and infrastructure modifications necessary to achieve this goal.

### Environment

The high levels of roadway congestion exacerbate air emissions, particularly in areas that do not meet national air quality standards. Passenger rail would provide these corridors a more energy-efficient and less emitting option. Additionally, passenger rail service will reduce the need to use more land for auto-centric and air facilities, and it will mitigate future wetland and water resource impacts since the service would utilize existing rail.

Passenger rail is also a mode of travel resilient to extreme weather events and temperatures. Ohio experiences the breadth of these, which create hazardous conditions for road travel and contribute to mass airline cancellations. Passenger rail offers a safer, convenient alternative for travelers to reach where they want and need.

### Equity

Auto travel is adequate for people that have access to and can drive their own vehicles; however, it poses limitations to people who are unable to drive due to health conditions and to those who do not own a vehicle or cannot afford the cost of driving (such as low-income families and students). Likewise, there are also issues with air travel as the predominant mode, including ticket cost and limitations due to health conditions.

Planning for the economic development potential that would stem from this initiative – including direct and indirect employment growth, workforce training programs, and transit-oriented development – will be inclusive of all incomes and demographics and specifically focused on areas of persistent poverty and underrepresentation.