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Grant awarded for passenger rail study



All Aboard Ohio (AAO) has been awarded an almost \$17,000 grant by the Columbus Foundation for the purpose of conducting a detailed economic impact study of the proposed revival of passenger rail service in the Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati rail corridor.

The Columbus-based policy analysis company, Scioto Analysis, has been hired to do the study with the aim of showing what the reintroduction of multiple daily trains in the 3C&D Corridor can generate in terms of business development, jobs, and other community economic benefits for both the major cities and other station-stop communities like Crestline, Delaware, Springfield, and Hamilton.

"We are grateful to the Columbus Foundation for this grant and excited about what positive economic benefits this study can determine," said AAO Board Chair Erin Rosiello.

AAO Executive Director Stu Nicholson added, "When you introduce good, frequent, and reliable service, passenger rail on state-supported corridors is already demonstrating significant economic growth in and around station stops in states like Illinois, Michigan, Virginia, North Carolina, Vermont, Maine, and California. It is also giving people a good option besides driving a car or the hassles of flying to do business or connect with jobs, education, health care, and more. And given growing climate change concerns, we certainly need more and greener options."

The study is expected to take slightly more than two months once it gets underway.

Earlier this year, Gov. Mike DeWine ordered the Ohio Rail Development Commission to apply for Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) study grants for both the 3C&D Corridor and a corridor connecting Cleveland and Toledo with Detroit. Grants for at least four more corridors are also being sought by two of Ohio's largest planning organizations in Cleveland and Columbus.

"But we want to focus on the 3C&D because it is the most densely populated and heavily traveled corridor in Ohio," said Nicholson. "The study results can potentially forecast what we can expect from the other corridors and demonstrate to Ohio's leaders why we should pursue passenger rail to the next levels of environmental engineering and development."

“This is one step in a long process, but it is one that can launch Ohio into a modern, multi-modal transportation system that moves more people, grows our economy, and creates a more mobile workforce,” Rosiello went on to say.