

An e-publication of the Mahoning River Corridor Initiative

May 2009

What's *rollin'*?

### **Passenger and High Speed Rail**

Work continues on the Cleveland-Youngstown-Pittsburgh Passenger Rail project. The letters and resolutions from the Mahoning River Corridor Mayors' Association members and other partners definitely put it on the radar screen. There was also considerable dialogue between the Corridor Initiative, All Aboard Ohio, the Ohio Rail Development Commission and Amtrak about the matter.

Corridor Initiative members attended the Ohio Rail-Transit Legislative Summit on April 29, 2009 to represent the Pittsburgh – Youngstown – Cleveland link. Matthew Dietrich, ORDC Executive Director, confirmed the Pittsburgh-Youngstown-Cleveland rail corridor would be one of four to be addressed in the \$7 million dollar Preliminary Environmental Impact Study for the Ohio Hub high speed rail project. ORDC is working with Pennsylvania officials to meet the necessary federal designation requirements.

Work also continues on restoring normal passenger rail service between Pittsburgh and Cleveland via Youngstown. Corridor representatives met with Derrick James from Amtrak and ORDC to discuss issues related to All Aboard Ohio's proposal to reconstruct track in Ravenna to facilitate the project.

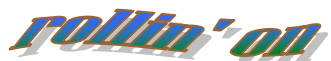
All involved agreed it was important for the local communities and partners to stay involved and show local support for the projects. The Initiative is networking with Cleveland and Pittsburgh groups to advocate for the projects. *How's that for regionalism?*

### **Urban University Program**

Special thanks to the Mahoning River Corridor Mayors' Association members and community partners who petitioned the Ohio House to continue funding the Urban University Program. The program enables the YSU Center for Urban and Regional Studies to provide resources and assistance to urban communities at substantial savings. The Governor's Budget had eliminated funding the program. The House version of the State Budget now includes funding.

The Corridor Initiative has asked the corridor mayors to contact Senate President Harris to include UUP funding in the Senate version of the budget.

Our state legislative delegation has been very supportive in making sure the matter is addressed and needs local support.



### **Ohio Brownfield Conference**

The Corridor Initiative and City of Youngstown have been invited to be presenters at the Ohio Brownfield Conference being held in Wilmington, Ohio on May 12-14, 2009

### **Intermodal Facility**

Finance and Grants Subcommittee members met with the Western Reserve Port Authority to discuss Corridor Initiative and role of WRPA. Port Authority agreed to take lead in filing Logistics and Distribution Program Letter of Intent with ODOT for establishing an intermodal facility in the Mahoning Valley. Along with the Regional Economic Development Director, the Corridor Initiative will help facilitate the process.

### **Campbell - Casey Roadway**

The Department of Development has committed \$235,000 towards the \$500,000 project to improve the roadway system in the corridor. The City of Campbell has also filed a pre-application through the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments for Appalachian Regional Commission funding for the project.

### **EfficientgovNow – Advance NEO**

In conjunction with the Mahoning River Mayors' Association, the Corridor Initiative has filed a project abstract for funding to implement an interactive website identifying and detailing properties in the river corridor available for economic development. On May 1, 2009, it was invited to submit a full application for funding consideration.

#### ***Initiative Meetings***

##### **Environmental/Recreation Subcommittee**

The Environmental/Recreation Subcommittee met on April 15, 2009 to review proposed projects. The projects are being categorized and prioritized as shorter-term and longer-term projects based upon factors such as current project status, site ownership, environmental issues, available state/federal assistance programs, match requirements/availability, etc. ***The subcommittee will be meeting again on Tuesday, May 19, 2009, 10:00 a.m. at Eastgate Regional COG to rate and prioritize the various projects.***

##### **Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee**

***The Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee will be meeting on Friday, May 8, 2009, 9:00 a.m. at Eastgate Regional COG to review proposed projects in light of similar factors being used by the Environmental/Recreation Subcommittee.***

All interested parties are welcome to attend.