

## CSX bridge-tunnel projects snare \$98M in U.S. funding

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TOLEDO, Ohio — Bridge and tunnel projects that will support rail freight transportation between a new terminal in North Baltimore and central Pennsylvania have been chosen to receive \$98 million in federal stimulus funds.

The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant includes \$30 million for improving clearances at 18 bridges over CSX Transportation railroad tracks in northeast Ohio that are too low to allow trains carrying stacked freight containers to pass beneath them. In most cases, the bridges will be replaced, though in a few, the tracks beneath them will be lowered.

Similar clearance improvements, including enlargement of tunnels, planned for Pennsylvania and West Virginia will be paid for in part with the balance of the grant, creating a double-stacked container route between North Baltimore and a CSX terminal in Chambersburg, Pa., near Harrisburg.

The project is part of a broader “National Gateway” plan proposed by CSX to provide double-stack clearances for its tracks between Ohio and several East Coast ports, including Baltimore, Portsmouth, Va., and Wilmington, N.C. CSX has estimated the plan’s cost at \$842 million, of which federal funds have been sought for 30 percent of the cost. Various states along the routes have been asked to contribute 22.4 percent. The railroad and its affiliates expect to pay about \$395 million, or about 46.6 percent.

Construction of the North Baltimore terminal began last summer and is scheduled for completion next year. Ohio previously committed \$5 million in state money and \$20 million in state-allocated Federal Highway Administration funds to safety projects related to that terminal.

The North Baltimore terminal is expected to boost northwest Ohio’s potential for transportation-related economic development while diverting freight from highway to rail.