



COTA Comprehensive Long Range Transit Plan

Introduction

During 2005 the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) has focused upon short term goals to restore its financial solvency and operational excellence, restore its reputation within the community, and successfully negotiate a union contract. At the same time, COTA began looking ahead to develop a comprehensive Long Range Transit Plan (LRTP) in central Ohio. Staff will complete the draft Plan in the spring of 2006, for consideration by the COTA Board of Trustees and inclusion in the MORPC regional transportation plan.

What are COTA's Goals for the Long Range Plan?

The Central Ohio Transit Authority's Comprehensive Long Range Transit Plan will:

- ⊙ provide safe, reliable, convenient, affordable and user-friendly transportation for every resident and visitor;
- ⊙ manage public resources effectively and efficiently;
- ⊙ provide transportation services to residents with special needs;
- ⊙ expand public support for needed transportation investments.

What is the planning process?

The Transit plan will be developed in three phases:

- ⊙ **Data Analysis/Needs Assessment** - review of regional travel information and public input (outlined below).
- ⊙ **Preliminary Alternatives** - development and review of transit options by geographic area.
- ⊙ **Plan Development** - selection of preferred corridor alternatives within the context of a regional transit system.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Feb. 15	Hilliard City Hall 3800 Municipal Way Council Chambers	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 16	Gahanna City Hall 200 South Hamilton Road Committee Room	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 21	Rhodes State Office Tower 30 East Broad Street Lobby Hearing Room	11:30 - 1:30 p.m.
Feb. 21	Worthington City Hall 6550 North High Street 2nd Floor Meeting Room	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 22	MORPC 285 East Main Street	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 23	Linden Transit Center 1390 Cleveland Avenue Lobby	5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

PLANNING PROCESS & SCHEDULE	2005						2006							
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Conduct Regional Travel Analysis/Needs Assessment														
Develop and Evaluate Preliminary Alternatives														
Develop Regional Plan														
Conduct Public Involvement Meetings and Focus Groups														

What is the Public Involvement Program?

Public involvement is a crucial element in development of COTA's comprehensive Long Range Transit Plan. An ambitious program has been developed consistent with the three phases of the planning process. A combination of activities will give citizens throughout central Ohio a variety of opportunities to involve themselves in the process and to affect its outcome. Informational and input opportunities include public meetings, surveys, focus groups, and an interactive website.

A series of public meetings will be held for each phase of the planning process - at the beginning to help identify needs, at the mid-point to provide input on alternative concepts, and at the end to respond to draft plan recommendations. The meetings will be held throughout the COTA service area. Each meeting will include a presentation by COTA staff, followed by an opportunity for input from attendees. Phase I public meetings were completed in November 2005. The schedule and locations for Phase II Preliminary Alternatives meetings are shown in the box on the cover page of this document.

In addition to the meetings and focus groups, public comment can also be provided using the survey on the COTA website: www.cota.com. Please encourage friends, neighbors, and co-workers to visit the website and fill out the survey. We encourage you to return to the web site periodically for updates and additional input opportunities. You can contact COTA staff directly to provide additional input or request information.

In addition, MORPC's Transportation Advisory Committee, Citizen Advisory Committee, and Policy Committee will be used to solicit input and advice on the plan and to disseminate information to the region's jurisdictions. COTA staff will also provide various jurisdictions throughout central Ohio with updates during the plan development. Information on the progress of the plan and public involvement opportunities will be a regular feature of MORPC's quarterly newsletter.

Comments, questions and requests for more information can be directed to:

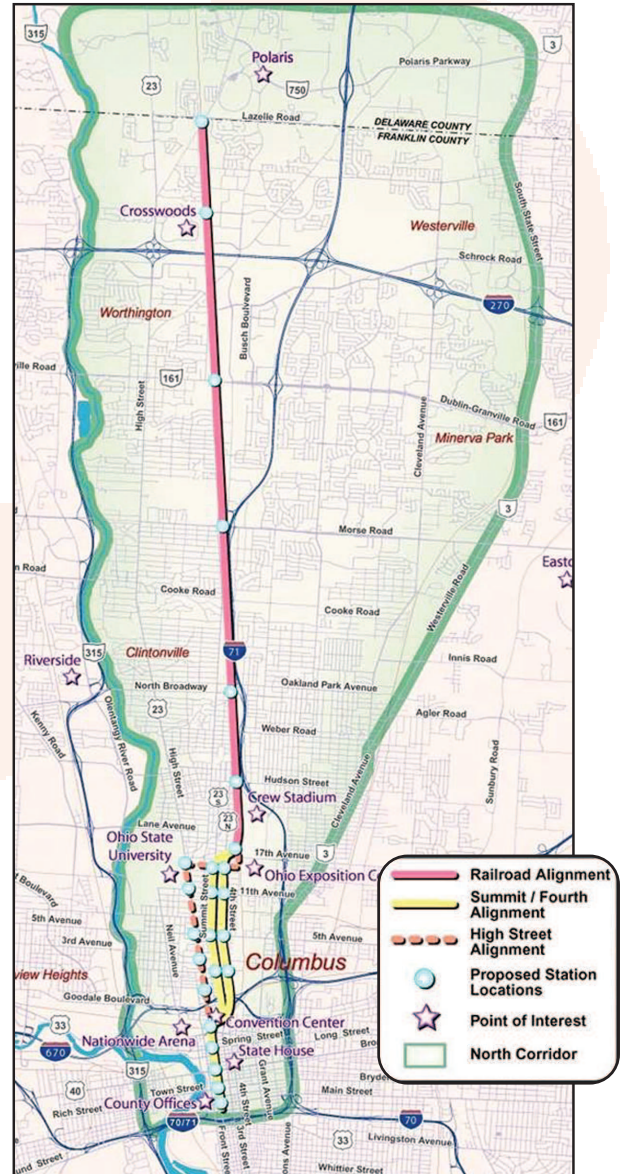
COTA-Long Range Plan
1600 McKinley Avenue
Columbus OH43222
(614) 275-5812
www.cota.com

The North Corridor Transit Project

The North Corridor has been identified as a candidate for fixed-guideway transit in prior transportation plans for the region. The recommendation of the North Corridor analysis will be incorporated into the comprehensive Long Range Transit Plan.

Why is the North Corridor the first corridor to be studied for transit investments?

- The corridor has the region's highest population concentration which is projected to grow by 31% and have a population of 366,854 by 2030.
- The North Corridor has 37% of the region's jobs and employment is projected to grow by 28% by 2030.
- The North Corridor experiences the highest traffic congestion in the region, which is projected to increase significantly in the future.



What are the transportation alternatives being studied for the North Corridor?

Four alternative transit modes are under study for the North Corridor:

- ⦿ **Enhanced Bus** (also known as No Build) - minor modifications to the current transit system, using conventional buses. Most of this option is carried forward in the alternatives below.
- ⦿ **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** - high capacity buses designed for fast loading, with some or all operations within dedicated transit right-of-way.
- ⦿ **Streetcar** - single electric vehicles with overhead power operating in exclusive right of way or mixed traffic.
- ⦿ **Light Rail Transit (LRT)** - single vehicles or multi-car trains operating in exclusive right of way or in mixed traffic. Individual vehicles are somewhat larger than streetcars, and can operate at higher speeds.



What fixed guideway routes are under review in the North Corridor?

The BRT, streetcar, and LRT options all use CSX/NS freight railroad right-of-way north of I-270 to the vicinity of 18th Avenue. Each alternative will follow different route options in the “Mid Corridor” area from the freight railroad right-of-way to High Street downtown as outlined below.



BRT: Summit Street (southbound) and Fourth Street (northbound) to Short North, then shift to High Street into Downtown. The OSU campus will be served by a separate BRT route extending from the railroad right-of-way to the University along local streets.

Streetcar: 16th/17th and 18th Avenues to High Street.

- LRT:** Three mid corridor alignments are being studied:
- ⦿ Summit (inbound) and Fourth Street (outbound) to Short North, then shift to High Street.
 - ⦿ Summit (inbound) and Fourth Street (outbound) to Chittenden, then cross to High Street.
 - ⦿ 16th/17th and 18th Avenues to High Street.

COTA is also studying two potential extensions within the Corridor, north into Delaware County, and south to Sycamore Street.

How can the public participate in the North Corridor project?

Communities, corridor residents and businesses can assist COTA in selecting the mode(s), station locations, maintenance facility site and offer input on the proposed extensions. Comments, questions and requests for more information can be directed to:

COTA-North Corridor
 1600 McKinley Avenue
 Columbus OH 43222
 Toll Free: (866) 724-5268
www.cota.com

To receive this information in an accessible format, please call (614) 275-5828.