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September 22, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Capital Construction and Regional Partnerships Challenge Grants Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County (ADAMH), I write in support of the Central Ohio Transit Authority's (COTA) request for funding from Capital Construction and Regional Partnership Challenge Grants within the USDOT NAE Grant Program for the West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor.

As the county behavioral health authority for Franklin County, ADAMH provides a pathway to health and healing for individuals and families in seeking resources for addiction and mental health. Too often, the lack of affordable and reliable access to transportation is a major barrier for those seeking treatment and to connect to services. The expansion of public transportation options in the Central Ohio region, like the proposed West Broad Street BRT corridor, will help address many social determinants of health through increased access to healthcare and employment.

The West Broad Street BRT corridor is the first rapid transit corridor that will be constructed as part of the regional LinkUS partnership of COTA, City of Columbus, Franklin County, and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. LinkUS is Central Ohio's comprehensive mobility initiative to help address growth, affordability and opportunity gaps in our community. Central Ohio is one of the fastest growing regions in the country and is on track to increase by 726,000 more residents over the next 25 years.

These milestones were only possible due to the strong partnership and commitment of COTA, the City of Columbus, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, and Franklin County. We believe that the transformational impact that the West Broad BRT will make in our community perfectly aligns with both the Capital Construction and Regional Partnership Challenge Grant components of the NAE Grant. ADAMH wholeheartedly encourages USDOT to fund this application. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Erika Clark Jones (signature)

Erika Clark Jones
CEO