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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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September 21, 2023

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The City of Columbus is proud to partner with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) on joint applications seeking funding for the West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit Corridor from the Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Capital Construction Grant Program and the NAE Regional Partnerships Challenge Grant Program

The W. Broad Street BRT corridor is part of a comprehensive mobility plan called LinkUS, which is a regional partnership led by COTA, Columbus, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, and Franklin County. 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, resulting in 3.15 million residents by 2050. LinkUS is essential in helping Columbus, Franklin County, and Central Ohio to address growth, affordability, and opportunity gaps within our communities. My administration is committed to building an equitable transportation system that addresses long-term poverty and uplifts disadvantaged communities; and this project marks a significant step forward in making this commitment a reality.

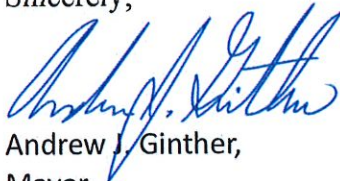
The West Broad Street BRT corridor is the first rapid transit corridor that will be constructed as part of LinkUS. It will run approximately 9.3 miles, through a combination of dedicated lanes and mixed traffic, along West Broad Street through Franklin County, connecting Prairie Township, Franklin Township, Hilltop, and Franklinton to Downtown Columbus. The corridor will also connect the workforce to Columbus State Community College, a federally designated anchor institution for the Columbus Workforce Hub. Dedicated lanes for BRT, achieved through conversion of general travel lanes, will provide a quicker, reliable travel experience while limiting the need for right-of-way acquisition and community displacement. This investment will greatly improve the opportunity gaps along the corridor, which stem from significant socio-economic disparities: approximately 76% of residents live within an area of persistent poverty; 36% of residents are Black, Indigenous, or persons of color; 1/3 of residents live below the federal poverty level; and 16% of households lack access to a personal vehicle.

THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

In addition to partnering with COTA on these applications and the LinkUS initiative, Columbus is responsible for maintaining more than half (approximately 4.9 miles) of the US-40 corridor within the project limits. As a facility owner, Columbus will continue to work with COTA through the design process to ensure the infrastructure changes are accessible to all, and create a safer environment for all roadway users – regardless of travel mode or ability.

LinkUS and the West Broad Street BRT corridor are a generational investments that will transform not just Columbus, but all of Central Ohio. I respectfully request that the U.S. Department of Transportation consider the transportation challenges within Columbus, the need to close opportunity gaps that currently separate residents, and the potential this project has to transform the lives of so many in our region. I urge your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew J. Ginther". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "G".

Andrew J. Ginther,  
Mayor