

September 13, 2023

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

RE: West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

As the President and CEO of The Columbus Partnership, I am writing in support of the Central Ohio Transit Authority's (COTA) funding request under the Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). The funds will go toward conducting a comprehensive capacity, economic, and market analysis as well as generate resource and policy recommendations for the remaining transit stations along the West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor.

The Columbus Partnership is a non-profit, membership-based leadership organization of 80 chairpersons, chief executive officers and senior executives from the Region's leading businesses and institutions. With the support of our members, including Fortune 500 CEOs, leaders of top universities and research organizations, our mission is to make Central Ohio the most prosperous region in the world. The Columbus Partnership and our community business leaders are united in supporting COTA's construction of BRT corridors in Central Ohio because we know firsthand the significant impact that access to reliable public transit will have on our community.

The West Broad Street BRT corridor is the first rapid transit corridor that will be constructed as part of LinkUS, Central Ohio's innovative transportation initiative meant to address growth, affordability, and opportunity gaps in our community. The Pilot Program for TOD will support analyses that will inform what resources and policies are necessary to enable equitable transit-oriented development. It is imperative that COTA conduct these analyses prior to beginning construction on new BRT corridors to prevent the displacement of existing residents and ensure a more connected Columbus Region.

The LinkUS strategy is to preserve existing housing affordability, jobs and businesses, and valued community resources and amenities while improving access to economic opportunities for residents such as jobs and community services. Thanks to the continued partnership between the Central Ohio business community, COTA, the City of Columbus, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, and Franklin County, the LinkUS initiative will serve as an important inflection point for the future of our Region. Community partners have invested significant resources and effort into the success of the LinkUS initiative and the Pilot Program for TOD that will ensure further investment is used effectively to uplift all residents, especially those who have been historically underserved in our Region. Thank you for your consideration of COTA's application, and we are happy to support their ongoing efforts to make the Columbus Region more accessible and equitable for all.

Very truly yours,



Kenny D. McDonald
President and CEO
KM/gb