

September 29, 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 Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Office of Government Affairs at The Ohio State University strongly supports the Central Ohio Transit Authority's (COTA) funding request under the Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). The proposal aims to comprehensively analyze and make policy recommendations for transit stations along the West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor.

TOD is paramount for our institution as it enhances campus accessibility, making it easier for students, faculty, and staff to commute sustainably, reducing congestion and parking demands. Additionally, it will foster stronger connections between our university and its surrounding communities, stimulating economic growth and providing students with valuable opportunities for internships and community engagement in our rapidly expanding region.

The West Broad Street BRT corridor is part of the LinkUS partnership, addressing the growing needs of Central Ohio's transportation infrastructure. LinkUS envisions constructing five rapid transit corridors, increasing transit service hours by 45%, and significant investments in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. The West Broad Street BRT is one of these corridors and includes 17 stations covering approximately 9.3 miles, connecting various neighborhoods to Downtown Columbus. This project addresses opportunity gaps in the community, serving residents with lower income levels and limited transportation access while linking them to job opportunities.

In conclusion, The Ohio State University's Office of Government Affairs strongly encourages the U.S. Department of Transportation to fund COTA's West Broad Street BRT project application. The collaboration among COTA, the City of Columbus, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Franklin County, and OSU aligns perfectly with the goals of the Pilot Program for TOD and promises significant benefits for the community.

Sincerely,

Stacy Rastauskas
Vice President of Government Affairs