

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 Neighborhood Access and Equity (NAE) Capital Construction and Regional Partnerships Challenge Grants Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Office of Government Affairs at The Ohio State University strongly supports COTA's funding request for the West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor through the USDOT NAE Grant Program. This support is based on Ohio State's significant role in the region as a major employer, healthcare provider, higher education institution, and research entity. Such investments not only expand accessibility but also foster collaboration and partnerships with the surrounding Central Ohio community.

The West Broad Street BRT corridor is a pivotal component of the LinkUS partnership, aiming to address Central Ohio's rapid growth and affordability challenges. This BRT will span 9.3 miles with 17 stations, will connect various neighborhoods to Downtown Columbus, boasting dedicated transit lanes, premium stations, and frequent service intervals. This investment will target residents living in persistent poverty and those facing opportunity gaps.

Furthermore, LinkUS envisions transforming the areas around BRT stations into pedestrian-friendly spaces, enhancing walkability, biking, and public transit. The community is seeking a USDOT Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Grant to conduct essential capacity, economic, and market analyses for transit stops on the corridor.

The success of these endeavors is attributed to the strong partnership between COTA, the City of Columbus, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, and Franklin County. The West Broad BRT's transformative impact aligns perfectly with the University's land grant mission and The Ohio State University encourages USDOT to fund this application. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Stacy Rastauskas  
Vice President Government Affairs