



MEETING: COTA BOARD STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024

TIME: 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

LOCATION: WILLIAM G. PORTER BOARDROOM

MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mentel called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Board Members Present

Sean Mentel

Erica Clark Jones

Amy Taylor

Kumi Walker

Marlon Moore, Board Chair

Board Members Absent

3. NEW BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENT

Chair Moore administered the Oath of Office to COTA's new Board Trustee, Amy Taylor. Trustee Taylor is the President of Downtown Columbus, Inc. and was appointed to the COTA Board by the City of Columbus to complete the term held by former Trustee Jennifer Gallagher.

4. APPROVAL OF STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Trustee Walker motioned to approve the March 5, 2024, Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Meeting minutes. Seconded by Trustee Clark Jones. Motion carried.

5. NEW BUSINESS

PRESENTATION

LINKUS UPDATE – KIM SHARP, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Senior Director of Development Kim Sharp presented a LinkUS Update. The LinkUS Update included maps, corridor design work, East Main BRT Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Amendment, and Equitable Transit Oriented Development (ETOD). The Corridor Status Update is as follows:

- West Broad Street Corridor at 60% Design; Access management – bike lanes and parking



- East Main Street Corridor at 30% Draft Design; Working with all communities along the corridor
- Northwest Corridor at Scoping 30% Design
- Downtown Convergence – Transit System designed; multi-modal and mixed-use transit center evaluation multi-modal plan (City of Columbus) Q2 2024

LinkUS is going to build premium rapid transit with faster, more reliable public transportation. This means LinkUS is going to build at least five new rapid transit corridors similar to what was modeled in Insight2050 Corridor Concepts. Three of these rapid transit corridors are already in design and could be operational as soon as 2030. Future slides will dive into this further. However, LinkUS also envisions 45% more service hours by 2050, meaning extended service hours, more frequency, and new routes for existing COTA transit operations and expansion of the COTA Plus ride share system.

East Main Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) adoption included Rich Street, Main Street and High Street in Downtown. The Downtown Convergence Milestones are:

- August 2021: COTA Board adopted three separate Locally Preferred Alternatives (LPA) for East Main Street, West Broad Street and East Broad Street
- 2021: Desire to further study multi-modal alternatives Downtown including 3rd Street/High Street and Rich Street/Main Street among LinkUS partners
- 2022 – Spring 2024: two separate and concurrent studies funded by COTA and City of Columbus to analyze multi-modal alternatives Downtown, process included Downtown stakeholder engagement and analysis of alternatives including: development/growth, traffic, parking/access management, safety, active transportation, mobility terminals and local bus service
- March 2024: Detailed schedule for both East Main BRT (Kimley-Horn) and downtown multi-modal student (WSP) and certified traffic through March – WSP
- April 2024: Certified traffic submitted to ODOT for review
- May 2024: East Main LPA revision to COTA Board
- July 2024: East Main BRT Rating Request submission with ‘reasonable financial plan’ to COTA Board (for August submission to FTA)

The East Main BRT LPA was amended from 13 miles to 13.6 miles. The justification for the amended East Main BRT LPA: public feedback and operational analysis; use of High Street for RT along with nine fixed-route lines; High Street close-downs for races and parades on a regular basis – cannot re-route a BRT line; Third Street redevelopment potential – redesign the street as a complete street more for pedestrians and appropriate infill development; and transit operations – short term utilization of Spring Street terminal for end of line, long-term align with other future BRT lines and Amtrak station.

RESOLUTION 2024-XX – AUTHORIZING THE ADOPTION OF THE REVISED EAST MAIN STREET LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE – KIM SHARP, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

The revised East Main LPA would include 13.6 miles of BRT between COTA’s Spring Street Terminal and the Eastwood Development past Taylor Road, 19 BRT stations, and operation in dedicated guideway for 8.7 miles, switching to 4.9 miles of mixed traffic in Bexley, over I-270 and at the end of the line in Reynoldsburg. In Downtown Columbus, East Main BRT would operate bi-directionally on Main Street with



a one- to two-way conversion before using contraflow lanes on 3rd Street and Spring and Long Streets to reach the end-of-line at the Spring Street Terminal.

It was recommended by the committee to be placed on the Board regular agenda.

RESOLUTION 2024-XX – SUBMITTING TO THE VOTERS A THREE-FOURTHS OF ONE PERCENT TAX LEVY – CHRISTINA WENDELL, CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER AND GENERAL COUNSEL LEGAL AFFAIRS

The ballot language under consideration by the Board would repeal the one-fourth of one percent (.25) 10-year renewable sales tax collection approved in 2016, and up for renewal in 2026. The .25 sales tax would be replaced by a three-fourths of one percent sales tax (.75) in perpetuity. This ballot initiative combined with the current permanent quarter of a percent sales tax would make COTA's sales tax collection rate 1 percent. This would put COTA in line with Cuyahoga County, and slightly ahead of Hamilton County – both of which are smaller in population.

The ballot language, as presented today, is an important step in bringing the LinkUS vision to a reality.

It was recommended by the committee to be placed on the Board regular agenda.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Mentel motioned to adjourn the meeting. It was moved by Trustee Walker, seconded by Trustee Taylor that the meeting be adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

ADOPTED: September 10, 2024
Date Adopted

SIGNED: 
Chair, Strategic & Operational Planning Committee

ATTEST: 
DocuSigned by:
President/CEO

Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Members

Andy Biesterveld, Chief Staff Liaison
 Sean Mentel, Chair
 Erika Clark Jones
 Amy Taylor
 Kumi Walker