

NEXTGEN

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Task 4: Public Involvement Plan

Version 5, Submitted March 16, 2015

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Task 3 Public Involvement Plan

Project Overview

As the primary provider of public transit services in central Ohio, COTA is embarking on a long-range planning effort to identify public transportation needs and opportunities for the next 35 years. This plan reflects Central Ohio's recent growth trends, which have been robust and are expected to continue into the future. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's (MORPC) recent study, insight2015, estimated that Central Ohio will add an additional 500,000 residents and 300,000 jobs by 2050. This growth has also been accompanied by new lifestyle preferences and priorities, including housing and travel choices as well as employment, education, entertainment and recreation opportunities.

While other efforts have worked to define these trends and translate them into local and regional growth plans, COTA NextGen will consider how the trends will influence opportunities and demand for public transportation. The plan is scheduled to be completed by spring 2016.

COTA NextGen goals are to:

1. Lead the community in envisioning what our public transportation system needs to accomplish in the coming decades to ensure Central Ohioans have access to jobs, housing, education, and services.
2. Prepare Central Ohio for future growth by identifying transit investments that integrate with regional plans and goals. Critical regional goals include maintaining regional competitiveness, minimizing sprawl and responding to demographic preferences.
3. Create transit investment options to support local and regional efforts to develop transit oriented and multimodal communities.
4. Identify conventional and creative revenue options that offer potential to support the recommended plan and ensure the plan can be implemented.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overarching goal of the Public Involvement Plan is to provide a clear summary of how COTA NextGen will engage and communicate with central Ohio residents. Because COTA NextGen will overlap with both the Transit System Review (TSR) and CMAX Cleveland Avenue public engagement processes, the study team will take care to differentiate between these planning efforts as well as other COTA projects and activities. We will also coordinate with MORPC's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and City of Columbus' Connect ColumbUS Multimodal Plan public engagement efforts, where possible. Our efforts to coordinate and integrate the outreach efforts will be ongoing.

Specific objectives of the Public Involvement Plan are to:

1. Develop an extensive, inclusive community and stakeholder engagement plan that includes a variety of techniques to engage a breadth of perspectives throughout the transit service area.

2. Ensure that audiences that traditionally have not participated in public transportation issues are provided an opportunity to have their voices reflected in the Plan, particularly Environmental Justice and Title VI populations.
3. Create support for implementing the recommendations and projects outlined by COTA NextGen.
4. Provide the study team with a framework for identifying and assigning responsibilities to achieve the objectives of the Public Involvement Plan, while allowing for flexibility and creativity as new ideas emerge.

PROJECT PHASES

The public involvement and outreach process is broadly organized around three rounds of engagement, each of which is tied to specific project phases:



PHASE 1 VISION, NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES (AND PROJECT START UP)

The public involvement “infrastructure” and start-up consists of developing the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) and establishing the look and messaging for the project, or project brand. It also involves confirming participants for the Project Advisory Group (PAG), identifying interviews with community leaders and selecting groups for participation in targeted stakeholder group discussions.

Phase 1 will solicit input from the public and targeted stakeholders on their ideas and vision for how public transportation could – and should - be developed in Central Ohio. The goal during this phase is to understand the community’s values, aspirations and priorities for future transportation services and investments. This phase of outreach will begin in February 2015 and is anticipated to conclude in May 2015.

PHASE 2 DEFINE AND EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES

The public involvement team will work with the technical team to package, describe and present the transit investment alternatives identified for Central Ohio. The public involvement goal of this phase is to ensure the alternatives are presented in a way that is clear and understandable, including articulating the trade-offs associated with different choices. Once the alternatives have been adequately described, we will engage the community in a series of exercises where they have the opportunity to tell us their priorities and preferences for the choices presented. This phase of the outreach is expected to take place between June 2015 and December 2015.

PHASE 3 RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The third phase will share draft recommendations with stakeholders and the public with the goal of collecting additional input to refine draft recommendations. The public involvement materials will also help the community understand how their input shaped the analysis and outcomes. Finally, the final round of public engagement will be designed to build support and momentum for the recommendations, so that both the public and stakeholders are willing to support COTA as it moves toward implementation. This final phase of public engagement will occur between January and April 2016.

Phase 1: Vision, Needs, and Opportunities (and Project Start Up)

The purpose of the Phase I outreach effort is to 1) develop infrastructure (project brand, templates, website, etc.) for the overall project and; 2) develop a vision for the next generation of transit needs in Central Ohio. The outreach tasks associated with this effort are described in the following text. Outreach strategies include:

- Developing public outreach and communication infrastructure (public involvement plan, project brand, project website)
- Establishing a Project Advisory Group
- Interviewing key community leaders
- Conducting targeted stakeholder meetings
- Holding public outreach events (meetings, workshops and neighborhood sessions)
- Developing a project video for use on website, meetings and other events

Each of these tasks is described in the following text. We expect that the Phase 1 outreach efforts will begin in January 2015 and continue until May 2015. A detailed list of individual activities related to each activities and their schedule is included in Appendix D.

Task 3.1.1 Public Involvement Plan

As a first step, the study team will create a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to guide the COTA NextGen planning process. This is the first outreach task in the process and should be complete by mid-February 2015. The PIP identifies the goals, process and communication techniques for engaging the public and targeted stakeholders. It also identifies responsible parties as well as a schedule of activities (see Appendix D). The PIP will evolve as input is received from the public.

Task 3.1.2 Project Brand

The study team will create a “brand” for this study to define the project in a way that is unique and distinct from other transportation plans and efforts, but also works within COTA’s existing brand framework. This task is a building block upon which other tasks, such as the website, depend on; it is scheduled for completion early in the study process and will be finalized by mid-February 2015. The brand will include:

- Logo and tagline/slogan
- One-paragraph message that explains the project
- PowerPoint presentation template
- Word document/letterhead template
- Fact sheet template
- Report cover template
- eblast template (email template in HTML format)

Task 3.1.3 Contact Database

The study team will prepare a contact database to communicate with stakeholders and members of the public, such as sending announcements about available study materials and opportunities to participate in specific events (surveys, meetings, etc.). The database will be populated using existing lists as well as new contacts generated as part of the project. The initial database will be developed in February and March 2015 and updated periodically as new contact information is collected.

As needed, this database will be provided to MORPC, who has offered to assist with coordinating communication efforts related to the City of Columbus Connect Columbus Multimodal Plan, MORPC's MTP and related planning initiatives.

Notes on Task

Engage Public Affairs will manage the contact database with assistance from PolicyWorks. "Develop" means collecting/consolidating/organizing existing COTA databases into a new, COTA NextGen Excel database. It will include tabs for the Project Advisory Group, Key Leader Interviews, Project Staff, and other stakeholders. "Maintain" means entering contacts provided by COTA and study team members, and correcting emails and addresses, to the extent reasonable, when emails or mailed materials are returned due to an inaccurate address. Engage will also add contact information for those who attend public meetings and/or sign up online for notifications of opportunities to provide public input.

Task 3.1.4 Project Website

We will update COTA's existing COTA Next Generation webpage to serve as a resource for people interested in following progress, reviewing study documents and making comments on the re-named COTA NextGen Plan. The study team will work to get the project website up and running early in the project, so it is live no later than March 2015. At minimum, elements will include:

- COTA NextGen logo, tagline, color scheme
- Announcements of public meetings and other engagement opportunities, as well as related meeting materials and summaries
- Accomplishments, study reports
- A blog component, where stakeholders can post comments for the study team's response
- A "Contact Us" form to allow users to join the contact database and be notified of public meetings

It is anticipated the website will be updated at least four times after project onset: prior to each of three rounds of public meetings, and when the final study results and recommendations are released. The project website updates for Phases 2 and 3 will include an interactive survey element.

Task 3.1.5 Project Advisory Group

The study team will convene and staff a Project Advisory Group (PAG) representing COTA and a wide breadth of interests to ensure multiple points of view are represented. The PAG will help guide and direct the study throughout the COTA NextGen process. The PAG will contribute technical input, share feedback from the organizations they represent and assist with engaging

their constituencies during opportunities for widespread public input. (Please see Appendix A for PAG candidates.)

The PAG will meet up to eight times during the 16-month project. Six meetings are scheduled at this point in the study, recognizing that additional meetings may be needed as the study unfolds and additional input is needed. The meetings are scheduled every other month, starting in March 2015 and continuing over the course of the project. The NextGen team will use some meetings to review plans for upcoming public outreach activities and some meetings to report on the findings collected during the outreach. A tentative schedule for the meetings and planned topics for discussion are included in Table 2. Meetings will be held in person, but the PI team will make sure PAG members also have the opportunity to participate by conference call/web format.

PAG meeting schedules will have a three-week preparation period, allowing time for COTA to review all materials, for the consultant team to respond to those comments, and ensure that materials can be sent to the PAG one week before each meeting. PAG members will have the week before the meeting and the week after the meeting to comment and respond to information provided. Comments will be accepted at the meeting or in writing.

Table 1 | Tentative Project Advisory Group Meeting Schedule

MEETING	TOPICS	SCHEDULE
Project Advisory Group Meeting #1	COTA NextGen overview (and schedule) overview of Public Involvement Plan and Phase 1 outreach/engagement details; collect input on goals and data.	March 12, 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #2	Evaluation methods, needs assessment and Phase 1 outreach/engagement results.	May 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #3	Tier 1 screening results and Plan final Phase 2 outreach/engagement details.	July 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #4	Alternatives definition and refinement; Phase 2 outreach/engagement activities ongoing.	September 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #5	Report on Phase 2 outreach activities Finalize plans for Phase 3 outreach/engagement details.	December 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #6	Final Plan, Funding/Financial Plan, implementation schedule and Phase 3 outreach/engagement results.	April 2016

Task 3.1.6 Community Leader Interviews

We will schedule meetings with community leaders shortly after the project's onset. The goal of these interviews is to inform people about the COTA NextGen effort, discuss how this project differs from other planning efforts, and collect insights into their expectations for transit service development in central Ohio. In some cases, we will meet with them again when recommendations emerge, to ensure they are informed and have the opportunity to provide their input on draft final recommendations. The study team will prepare interview guidelines to ensure consistency in the topics raised, but at the same time, the interviewer will allow the conversation to flow naturally and encourage individual stakeholders to voice their opinions. The study team will try to schedule an hour with each stakeholder to ensure ample time for the conversation, but in no case with the length of the interview be prescribed.

The study team will conduct 30 interviews, most of which will be conducted individually, although some may be conducted as small group discussions (one to five individuals). Approximately twenty of these will be conducted during Phase 1; the remaining 10 will be follow-up visits with interviewees later in the project, as noted above. The stakeholders selected for a second round of discussions will be determined by a combination of COTA staff and study team recommendations. We will also allow stakeholders to request a follow up interview if they wish.

Individual comments will not be attributed to any particular individual or organization. Key themes identified in the interviews will be summarized into a technical memo that will also include a list of the organizations participating in the process. The outcome will provide COTA more understanding of how community leadership perceives it, and what it will take for community leadership to embrace the community's vision for future transit in Columbus. This input will also help drive the development of our message strategy and the implementation plan. A list of organizations targeted for participation in the stakeholder interview process is included in Appendix A.

Task 3.1.7 Targeted Stakeholder Meetings

Young professionals, older adults and people with disabilities, faith leaders, new Americans, low income and other under-represented voices can be challenging to engage using traditional outreach methods. Recognizing the importance of these groups, the study team will facilitate six targeted stakeholder group meetings with representatives of agencies who specialize in working with these groups and/or with representatives of these target groups.

The meetings will be held during Phase 1. As part of each meeting, the study team will explain the COTA NextGen initiative, solicit their thoughts on needs and ideas, and ask for their assistance in promoting public meetings and hosting neighborhood sessions (more information on these below) to solicit input from these under-represented groups. A draft list of the targeted stakeholder groups is itemized in Table 4 (see also Appendix B).

The study team will be responsible for organizing the targeted stakeholder group meetings, inviting participants, facilitating the discussion and preparing a summary of key findings from each group. The study team will also prepare moderator guidelines to provide structure to the conversation and ensure consistency across the conversations. A draft of the moderator guidelines will be submitted to COTA for review in February so meetings can be held in early March. All meetings will be held in March and April 2015, so that the findings can be included in

the technical memo submitted at the end of April for distribution to the PAG before the May PAG meeting.

Table 2 | Proposed Targeted Stakeholder Group Meetings

	TARGET GROUP	CONTACTS	MEETING LOCATION (to be confirmed)
1.	Latino	Guadalupe Velasquez, Columbus Community Relations Commission; Lilleana Cavanaugh, Latino Affairs Commission; Columbus Catholic Services; Josue Vicente, Joe Mas	City of Columbus
2.	Somali, New Americans	Abdikhayr Soofe, Columbus Community Relations Commission; Beth Watkins, Columbus Community Refugee & Immigration Services; Jenny Acosta, Columbus Public Health	City of Columbus
3.	Low Income Populations	Judi Czarnicki, Southern Gateway; David Ciccone, United Way; Michael Wilkos, Columbus Foundation; Columbus Recreation Centers; Anthony Trotman, Franklin County Jobs & Family Services; Bo Chilton, Impact Ohio; Mark Mollenkopf, Mid-Ohio Foodbank; Ernest Perry, Hands On Central Ohio; Maude Hill, Homeport; Yvonne Hunnicutt, Human Services Chamber; Suzanne Coleman-Tolbert, COWIC	MORPC or Columbus Health Dept.
4.	African American Faith Leaders	Coordinate through Ministerial Alliance/Larry Price, Rev. Gilyard, Pastor Troy, Bishops Young, Clark and Ross, etc.	African American Church
5.	Seniors and People with Disabilities	AARP, Jobs and Family Services, Physicians CareConnection, Columbus Neighborhood Health Center; Columbus Public Health, MaryHaven, COTA Paratransit Advisory Committee, Center for Disability Empowerment	MORPC or Columbus Public Health Dept.
6.	Young Professionals	Columbus, suburban and United Way YP groups. Coordinate with Elissa Schneider, Kristen Easterday/Cols Chamber and Steve Michalovich/Dublin, others	Columbus Chamber of Commerce or Suburban Young Professional location

Task 3.1.8 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions

Experience has taught us that the most effective way to reach a broad segment of the community is to go to them. Our approach, therefore, tries to balance the importance of traditional meetings with additional strategies designed to encourage participation. Accordingly, we propose to one full day of traditional public meetings and a series of events where the study team goes out to the community.

The intent of the Phase 1 public meeting/targeted workshops/neighborhood sessions is to 1) let people know about the study (present COTA NextGen overview, schedule and preliminary data findings); and 2) solicit input on residents’ vision and aspirations for public transportation. We will ask people why they choose to live in central Ohio, how they define quality of life, and what is

essential for the region’s future public transportation system. Information collected during this phase will help us refine and adjust our outreach methods and approach. The approach to community engagement outlined in this phase will be repeated in subsequent phase. In each case, the community engagement will include up to three components:

1. **One, highly publicized day of public meetings**, to be held at an accessible location in Downtown Columbus from noon-2 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. The content will be the same at both meetings, but by holding two meetings in the same day the team will be able to attract different audiences, including those who may attend a meeting as part of their work assignments, and those who prefer to attend after a traditional work schedule. Each public meeting will be designed in a workshop format, which will include an overview presentation explaining the meeting purpose and expectations, followed by structured discussion and/or interactive exercises designed to solicit focused, practical input. Publicity includes:
 - a. News release sent to the media to explain the neighborhood sessions, public meetings and opportunity to provide feedback online
 - b. Information (meeting date, time, location and content) will be posted on the COTA and project websites and social media
 - c. Email notification sent to everyone on to the contact database
 - d. Paid advertising in the Columbus Dispatch, Columbus Post and Columbus Underground
 - e. Postcards hand-delivered to churches, social service agencies
 - f. Asking COTA Board, PAG members and stakeholders to notify their constituencies

2. **Targeted workshops and/or drop in sessions.** As a complement to the public meetings, we will host two workshops with targeted interest groups. Workshops will be held on the same day and at the same location as the public meetings, but will be scheduled at different times. We will invite one or more targeted groups (bicycling advocates, real estate officials and developers, economic development directors, university representatives, etc.) to a morning or afternoon session and encourage these groups to participate in a focused discussion about the NextGen plan, process and findings. While the meetings will be open to any member of the public, we will email invitations to these targeted groups. We will work with COTA, the PAG and members of the consultant team to identify groups to invite to these sessions.

3. Three **neighborhood sessions** around COTA’s service area will be held in the week(s) and the week following the “public meeting day.” Neighborhood sessions will consist of project booths that can be located and staffed in high traffic areas like the Columbus Urban League, community recreation centers, childcare centers and/or at scheduled neighborhood events, such as a farmer’s market or street fair. We designed the neighborhood sessions as a strategy to bring information to communities in a format that is accessible, convenient and easy. As we schedule the events we will look for opportunities to target groups that are typically underrepresented in similar planning processes.

The locations and events will be identified and confirmed once this Public Involvement Plan and schedule is approved and detailed public meeting/neighborhood session planning can begin. Neighborhood sessions will use the same exhibits and meeting materials used at the public meetings, but presented in more of an open house format.

The study team will submit a detailed public meeting/neighborhood session plan for COTA's review six weeks prior to each round of public meetings/neighborhood sessions. A sample meeting plan is included in Appendix C. In every case, we will identify venues that are accessible by transit and to people with disabilities. Venues will be equipped with interactive exhibits that will encourage people to draw their ideas on sketchpads, circle areas of interest on maps, take "selfies" in front of visionary transit ideas and post them on social media with the hash tag #COTANextGen. The study team will provide COTA with pictures after each session for posting on COTA's social media sites.

Table 3 | Phase 1 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions

PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENT	LOCATION*
Week of April 6 th : Two Public Meetings	Downtown Columbus
Week of April 6 th : Two Workshops	Downtown Columbus
Week 1: Neighborhood Session #1	TBD - Target low income population area Suburban or Columbus location
Week 2: Neighborhood Session #2	TBD – Target young professionals Suburban location
Week 2: Neighborhood Session #3	TBD – Target suburban area

**Locations and dates to be confirmed once this Public Involvement Plan and schedule are approved and detailed meeting planning can commence. A sample public meeting plan template is provided in Appendix C. The study team will submit a detailed public meeting/neighborhood session plan for COTA review six weeks prior to each round of public meetings/neighborhood sessions.*

Task 3.1.9 Short Project Videos

As part of the overall project, the study team will produce three short (30 second to 3 minute) videos. The videos will be designed to communicate critical information about the NextGen process to the public as well as to generate excitement and capture community ideas. While the concepts for these videos will be developed when detailed planning of each outreach phase is developed. In each case, the videos will be produced by COTA's vendor, under guidance of the study team with Nelson\Nygaard providing content and Engage overseeing video production. Engage will work with COTA prior to finalizing the video. The video will be used at public meetings, on the website and as part of other outreach events.

In the first phase of the NextGen outreach, the study team will use an existing COTA video that presents the NextGen plan and edit that video with the new logo and project website address. This re-working of the existing video will be conducted in March 2015. We anticipate preparing the first video in March so it can be used in the first series of outreach activities.

In addition, as part of the Phase 1 outreach, we will film the public and stakeholders at public meetings and neighborhood sessions as they tell us their vision for public transportation in just a sentence or two. This information may be incorporated into subsequent videos.

Task 3.1.10 Technical Memo

When the first phase of outreach activities is complete, the Nelson\Nygaard team will produce a technical memo: Central Ohio’s Ideas and Priorities for Transit Service Development. The memo will summarize the information presented to the public during Phase 1, the public’s feedback and how that feedback will affect the project moving forward. This memo is scheduled to be submitted to COTA in late April for review and comment, so it can be provided to the PAG members before the May meeting. The study team will also use findings in the memo to inform development of the evaluation process.

Public Outreach Phase 1: Deliverables

OUTREACH EVENTS/TASKS	INDICATIVE SCHEDULE
Public Involvement Plan	January 2015
Project Brand	January 2015
Contact Database	February 2015
Project Website	February 2015
Project Advisory Group Meetings	March 2015
Key Leader Interviews	February – March 2015
Targeted Stakeholder Group Meetings	March – April 2015
Public Meetings/Workshops	April 2015
Neighborhood Sessions	April 2015
Short Project Video	March 2015
Technical Memo Summarizing Phase I Outreach Findings	Late April 2015

Phase 2: Define and Evaluate Alternatives

The second phase of outreach is designed to collect input from the community on the individual transit projects and investment options that are being developed by the technical team. The goal of this phase is to ensure the alternatives are presented in a way that is clear and understandable and the trade-offs associated with different choices are clearly articulated. This phase is also aimed at getting feedback from stakeholders and members on the public regarding their preferences and priorities for transit system improvements. The Phase 2 outreach activities will be held between June and November 2015.

The key outreach strategies in this phase include:

- Updating the website, including development of an interactive web “survey”
- Conducting a statistically-valid public opinion poll
- Holding public outreach events (meetings, workshops and neighborhood sessions)
- Creating a project video for use on website, meetings and other events

Task 3.2.1 Statistically-Valid Public Opinion Poll

We will conduct a public opinion survey to more scientifically measure attitudes, aspirations and values with regards to public transportation investments, as well as preferences for specific ideas. The Nelson\Nygaard team will draft a survey and share it with COTA for their input and comment. A final survey will be agreed upon before the survey is administered regionally.

The survey is intended to be representative, so will be structured to reach a statistically-valid number of households. The study team expects that the survey will be administered by telephone using a combination of land line and mobile telephone numbers. It is also likely that the survey will be administered with ‘quotas’ to ensure appropriate response rates are achieved across all age groups and genders. The survey will be conducted by a professional research firm. We plan on crafting the survey over the summer (June and July 2015), so that we have a final, approved version by September. Our goal is to administer the survey in mid-September so that results are ready in early October and can inform development of recommendations.

Survey data will be analyzed to understand the collective values in COTA’s service area as well as for individual sub-areas and key demographic groups. The study team will analyze the data and prepare a summary report as well as an executive summary. All data files and tables will be given to COTA for additional analysis and use.

Task 3.2.2 Update Website with Online Survey

In addition to the statistically valid survey, the study team will also conduct an online survey to engage the public and give them an opportunity to tell us their preferences and priorities. The online survey tool will be designed to be fun, interactive and easy to understand. We plan on integrating the survey tool into the project website and administer the survey during the second and third rounds of public involvement.

There are two online programs that are widely used as part of strategic planning efforts, MetroQuest and MindMixer. The study team has experience with both tools and there are different advantages and disadvantages with each approach. Prior to launching the tool, the study team will discuss which tool offers NextGen and COTA the greatest strategic advantage and make a recommendation to COTA.

The online exercise will solicit input on emerging ideas and priorities starting the week of the Phase 2 public meetings (late September/early October 2015) and be open for comment for roughly six weeks, or until approximately the end of November, 2015. Consistent with Task 3.2.2, we will start designing the online survey, comparing and contrasting the two programs and developing content for the survey in July and August, so that is ready to be launched in September.

Once the survey has been shared with the public and findings are available, Nelson\Nygaard will summarize results from the survey and prepare executive summary materials for COTA's review. Data will be incorporated into the public outreach materials, as well as the overall findings.

Task 3.2.3 Public Meetings, Targeted Stakeholder Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions

Phase 2 public meetings/targeted workshops/neighborhood sessions will describe and present the emerging transit investment alternatives identified for central Ohio. The public involvement activities in this phase will be designed to give members of the public a chance to both understand the alternatives and the trade-offs associated with each choice, but also provide input on their preferences and priorities.

The format for the public meetings will be consistent with the format described in detail in Task 3.1.8, with one full day of public meetings that will include two public meetings and workshops with invited guests. An additional up to three neighborhood sessions will also be scheduled. These neighborhood sessions will be booths and tables set up and staffed at neighborhood events and/or high traffic locations.

At this point in project planning, the study team expects to hold the public meetings in the fall 2015, either in late September or early October. This schedule will also for the public to provide input into development of the alternatives and development of the draft final recommendations. Currently, the public meeting and neighborhood sessions are designed to mirror the process used in Phase 1, although the meetings will be held in different geographic locations and the study team will participate in different neighborhood and community meetings.

Table 4 | Phase 2 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions

PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENT	LOCATION*
Late September/early October: Two Public Meetings	Downtown Columbus
Late September/early October: Two Workshops	Downtown Columbus
Week 1: Neighborhood Session #1	TBD - Suburban location
Week 2: Neighborhood Session #2	TBD - Suburban location
Week 2: Neighborhood Session #3	TBD - Suburban location

**Locations and dates to be confirmed six weeks prior to the public meetings, We anticipate PAG members and workshop participants will have suggestions on where to hold neighborhood sessions and may willing to co-host and assist with promotion. Different suburbs will be targeted for each round of public meetings. The study team will submit a detailed public meeting/neighborhood session plan for COTA review six weeks prior to each round of public meetings/neighborhood sessions.*

Task 3.2.4 Short Project Video #2

The study team will produce a second project video in August 2015. The video will include an overview of the draft alternatives, highlighting emerging ideas, project options and the different alternatives. Nelson\Nygaard will draft content for the video, share those ideas with COTA for their input and approval and then work with Engage Public Affairs to produce the video. The video will be prepared by a third party contractor.

We will use the video to help communicate the ideas and to provide a quick education on project activities. We will post the video to the project website and also use at public meetings. We also expect other planning efforts in Central Ohio can use the video as part of their efforts.

Task 3.2.5 Technical Memo

At the conclusion of Phase 2, Nelson\Nygaard will produce a technical memo that summarizes the findings and comments received to date, such as: Central Ohio’s Ideas and Priorities for Transit Service Development. The memo will summarize the information presented to the public during Phase 2, the public’s feedback, and how that feedback will affect the project moving forward. A draft will be delivered to COTA in November 2015, so it can be reviewed and updated for PAG review at the end of 2015 or beginning of 2016.

Outreach Phase 2: Deliverables

OUTREACH EVENTS/TASKS	INDICATIVE SCHEDULE
Survey Development (Telephone Survey and Online Survey)	June – August 2015
Statistically-Valid Public Opinion Poll	September 2015
Project Advisory Group Meetings	July, September and December 2015
Updated Project Update with Online Survey Tool	September - October 2015
Public Meetings/Workshops	Late September/early October 2015
Neighborhood Sessions	Late September/early October 2015
Short Project Video #2	August 2015
Technical Memo Summarizing Phase 2 Outreach Findings	December 2015

Phase 3: Recommendations and Implementation Plan

COTA NextGen's third phase of public outreach will share draft recommendations with stakeholders and the public. The goals of this phase will be to 1) show the community how their input shaped the analysis and draft recommendations; 2) collect final feedback on proposed recommendations and 3) build support and momentum for the recommendations. The Phase 3 outreach events will include:

- Updating the website and online survey tools
- Holding public outreach events (meetings, workshops and neighborhood sessions)
- Conducting follow up interviews with stakeholders
- Creating a third project video

These activities are expected to take place between January and March 2016. A more detailed listing of the individual activities and their schedule is included as Appendix D.

Task 3.3.1 Update Website and Online Survey

In the third and final phase of outreach, the study team will use the website to provide information to the community about the draft recommendations and also collect information from them regarding their opinions and preferences. The website will be updated with draft reports and technical information. We will also design an online survey tool to make it as easy as possible for members of the public to check in with the project, find and understand the draft recommendations and provide their thoughts and comments.

The study team will update the website in January 2016, as the third phase of the outreach begins so the website is current and positioned to collect feedback for this final phase of engagement. The information will remain on the website until a final report is ready to replace it. The project website, availability of technical information and online engagement activities will be promoted broadly in communication materials.

Task 3.3.2 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions

The study team will use the final (Phase) 3 public meetings/targeted workshops/neighborhood sessions to share and vet the draft recommendations from the NextGen Plan. The goal of the meetings will be to present recommendations to the community, including people who provided input into the development of the projects and alternatives. We will also use these meetings to provide a final opportunity for comment on recommendations. Finally, this last round of public meetings will also be designed to create enthusiasm and momentum for plan implementation.

The format for the public meetings will be consistent with the format described in detail in Task 3.1.8, with one full day of public meetings that will include two public meetings and two workshops with invited guests. Three neighborhood sessions will also be scheduled. These neighborhood sessions will be booths and tables set up and staffed at neighborhood events and/or high traffic locations.

The study team anticipates holding public meetings in March 2016 after draft final recommendations are developed and documented. The study team proposes a similar format and approach to conducting these meetings as recommended for the other phases of the NextGen effort, although meetings will be held in different geographic locations and the study team will participate in different neighborhood and community meetings. However, as lessons are learned from previous work, these will be incorporated into the meeting designs, formats and locations.

Information collected from the public meetings will be incorporated into the final report. The study team will also take care to collect images and comments for use in social media and other activities.

Table 5 | Phase 3 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions

PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENT	LOCATION*
March/ 2016: Two Public Meetings	Downtown Columbus
March 2016: Two Workshops	Downtown Columbus
Week 1: Neighborhood Session #1	TBD - Suburban location
Week 2: Neighborhood Session #2	TBD - Suburban location
Week 2: Neighborhood Session #3	TBD - Suburban location

**Locations to be confirmed six weeks prior to the public meetings.*

Task 3.3.3 Community Leader Follow-up Interviews

As discussed, the goal of the third round of outreach is to share draft recommendations with the entire community, particularly to the individuals who helped develop them. As part of this effort, therefore, the study team will conduct follow-up interviews with up to ten of the individuals interviewed in the spring of 2015. The purpose of this follow-up conversation will be to share the recommendations and collect additional input.

Prior to conducting the interviews, Nelson\Nygaard will prepare a short interview guide that will be shared and approved by COTA prior to conducting the interviews. The stakeholders/key leaders selected for this for round of input will be determined jointly by COTA and the study team and reflect a combination of stakeholder interest and the need to build support and momentum. The study team expects to conduct between February and March, 2016. To the extent possible, interviews will be conducted in person and we expect most conversations to last up to an hour.

Task 3.3.4 Short Project Video #3

A final project video will be produced as part of the third phase of public outreach. We will use this video summarize the entire study as well as to highlight NextGen recommendations. Nelson\Nygaard will provide the content and Engage will produce the video, working with a third party contractor. We expect that the video will be available in March 2016. Our goal is that COTA will be able to use this video to help communicate and market project recommendations. The video will also be posted on the project website and used at scheduled outreach activities.

Task 3.3.5 Technical Memo

The findings from the Phase 3 public outreach will both be incorporated into the final recommendations as well as summarized in a technical memo. The memo will summarize the activities undertaken as well as comments provided. The memo will be reviewed and commented on by both COTA and the PAG before it is finalized.

Outreach Phase 3: Deliverables

TASK	INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME
Updated Project Website with Online Survey Tool	January 2015
Public Meetings/Workshops	Late March/early April 2016
Project Advisory Group Meetings	April 2015
Neighborhood Sessions	Late March/early April 2016
Community Leader Interviews (Follow up interviews)	January/February 2016
Short Project Video #2	March 2016
Technical Memo Summarizing Phase 3 Outreach Findings	April 2016

Communication Toolkit

The study team understands that while public outreach is scheduled around specific events and activities, communication about the NextGen plan will be comprehensive, robust and ongoing. Likewise, although there are distinct public outreach and communication phases, COTA staff and members of the study team may participate in other meetings and engagements to talk about the NextGen Plan. Recognizing this, the study team will develop a handful of communication tools for use throughout the project.

Task 3.4.1 Presentations

As the NextGen Plan begins there will be a number of opportunities to introduce the project to the community. Many of these meetings will be led and staffed by COTA alone. The study team will support these efforts by preparing a master PowerPoint presentation summarizing the project's goals, schedule and deliverables. This master PowerPoint presentation will be established during the preparation for the first PAG meeting and given to COTA to use it as part of other meetings. The study team will also manage a list of presentations made by COTA staff and members of the study team, provided COTA communicates each event to the team.

In addition, as the project progresses, the study team will update the PowerPoint materials up to four times over the course of the project, as directed and deemed necessary by COTA.

Task 3.4.2 COTA NextGen Briefing/Fact Book

As part of communicating both the NextGen Plan goals and intent, the study team will prepare a Briefing/Fact Book that summarizes the community's transit vision, and reports on existing conditions and opportunities. We will design the report to be highly accessible and graphical so it can be easily understood by non-technical audiences and members of the public. The aim of this document is to summarize the "State of the System" associated with public transit investment.

The Briefing Book will be prepared as part of the first technical memo summarizing existing conditions, needs and reporting on the first round of community input. It is expected to be available in May 2015 and can be distributed to stakeholders and members of the public in advance of developing alternatives.

Task 3.4.3 Social Media

Social media is an increasingly important method for communication with members of the public. As a result the NextGen team will use COTA's existing social media platforms to create excitement about the Plan, inform people about upcoming meetings and changes in the project website, and let them know about surveys or other opportunities for interacting with the project.

The study team plans on using social media up to two weeks before (to promote) the public meetings and neighborhood sessions, and up to one week after the meetings to encourage further comment; at the start of surveys and when new technical materials are posted to the website. As appropriate, the NextGen team will encourage participants at public meetings and neighborhood sessions to post pictures with a COTA hash tag message (e.g. #COTANextGen) on their own social media accounts.

Social media will be conducted using COTA's existing social media platforms, which include:

- Facebook: www.facebook.com/cotabus
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/COTABus
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/cotabus
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/playlist/cotabus
- LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/CentralOhioTransitAuthority

Task 3.4.4 Media Relations

The NextGen team understands that COTA will be the media spokesperson for the project. The study team will support media relations by drafting a news release and talking points prior to each round of public meetings/neighborhood sessions. COTA, however, will be responsible for finalizing, formatting and releasing the information to its media contacts. We expect that COTA will issue media releases two weeks prior to each round of public meetings.

The study team will also suggest other opportunities for COTA to seek media coverage, such as when decision milestones are reached or new, particularly newsworthy information is posted online.

Ongoing Communication Strategies

Outreach strategies and communication associated with the NextGen plan includes not only external strategies, but also methods to ensure effective communication internally. Internal communication includes project management activities, such as weekly project conference calls, but also coordination meetings with other ongoing planning studies, such as the City of Columbus' Connect ColumbUS effort and the insight2050 work being conducted by the Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). This section highlights internal communication and coordination efforts that will be conducted by members of the NextGen team.

Task 3.5.1 Internal Communication

The study team and COTA will hold weekly conference calls to discuss project progress, ongoing research analysis and plan for upcoming activities. As of February, 2015, the call is being held on Monday afternoons. Nelson\Nygaard will issue a draft agenda at least one day before the weekly call and provide meeting notes the following day.

In addition, on the day prior to PAG meetings and/or the public outreach meetings, when the study team is in town, the core team of planners will convene to discuss the planned events and share progress updates. Depending on the needs of the core team, the meetings may or may not be held with COTA staff. We will use these meetings to consider project status, immediate next steps (i.e. meetings held the next day) as well as short-term next steps (i.e. the next 4-6 weeks).

Task 3.5.2 Coordination with MORPC and City of Columbus

MORPC's insight2050 initiative and the City of Columbus Multimodal Plan (branded as Connect ColumbUS) are just two of several planning studies that will be developing data and soliciting public input in 2015 and 2016. While each initiative will have its own identify, COTA NextGen will be coordinated with those efforts to the extent possible. MORPC will coordinate efforts between these initiatives, convening meetings as needed and sharing public comments. We anticipate MORPC will host coordination meetings quarterly, starting in December 2014 and continuing through March 2016.

Task 3.5.3 Public Involvement Documentation

The study team will document feedback collected at public meetings, targeted stakeholder workshops and neighborhood sessions, stakeholder interviews, PAG and small group meetings, and input gathered through surveys and the public opinion poll. Where appropriate, we will also document relevant public feedback collected through the City of Columbus Connect ColumbUS public involvement process. COTA will provide documentation of additional feedback collected by COTA outside of the Public Involvement Plan. Meeting summaries will summarize content presented and the questions and comments collected; COTA will post these on the project website as appropriate to demonstration transparency.

Each of the three technical memos provided at the conclusion of each phase will summarize public involvement activities and recap how public input shaped the recommendations. An appendix will include meeting summaries, sign in sheets and meeting materials. The appendix will also include a log of emails, calls and/or letters, sample screen shots from social media posts and website blog posts.

Appendix A

Task 3.1.5 Project Advisory Group

The project team will convene and staff a Project Advisory Group (PAG). The PAG will include a wide range of stakeholders to ensure a diversity of viewpoints is represented. The PAG will help guide and direct the study throughout the COTA NextGen planning process. The project team expects the PAG will contribute technical input, share feedback from the organizations they represent and assist with engaging their constituencies during opportunities for widespread public input. PAG candidates are listed in Table 1. Upon COTA's concurrence, the PAG membership will be finalized and this PIP will be updated accordingly.

The PAG will meet up to eight times during the 16-month project; see Table 2 for a tentative schedule and topics. Meetings will be held in person, but the PI team will make sure PAG members also have the opportunity to participate by conference call/web format.

Table 1 | Project Advisory Group (Table will be finalized once COTA confirms invitation list and candidates confirm their participation)

	NAME	ORGANIZATION
1.	Kevin Wheeler	City of Columbus
2.	Jennifer Gallagher	City of Columbus
3.	Erik Janas	Franklin County
4.	Thea Walsh	Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)
5.	Beth Kelly-Snoke	The Ohio State University
6.	Kim Sharp	City of Westerville
7.	Don Walters	Grove City
8.	Joanne Shelly	City of Dublin
9.	Mike Brown	Experience Columbus
10.	Terri Gehr	Columbus State Community College
11.	Jennifer Adair	Ohio Attorney General's Office and North Linden Community Leader
12.	Betsy Pandora	Short North Alliance

13.	Paul Feldman	City of Worthington
14.	Bob Leighty	Parsons Ave. Merchants Association
15.	Al Edmondson	Mt. Vernon District Improvement Association and Mount Vernon Avenue Business Association
16.	Willis Brown	King-Lincoln Bronzeville Neighborhood Association
17.	Seth Golding	University Area Commission
18.	Nathan Wymer	Nationwide Insurance
19.	Jeff Zimmerman	Columbus Chamber of Commerce
20.	Mike Dalby	Columbus Chamber of Commerce
21.	Jennifer Chrysler	City of New Albany
22.	Roberta (Bobbie) Garber	Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority
23.	Bill Sundermeyer	AARP Ohio
24.	George Barnes	Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee
25.	Elissa Schneider	Mid-Ohio Foodbank and Chair, Transit Columbus
26.	Guadalupe Velasquez	City of Columbus
27.	Jack Shaner	Ohio Environmental Council
28.	Catherine Girves	Yay Bikes
29.	Trudy Bartley	Partners Achieving Community Transformation (PACT)
30.	Shannon Dillman	The Ohio State University
31.	Priyam Chokshi	City of Columbus

Table 2 | Tentative Project Advisory Group Meeting Schedule

MEETING	TOPICS	SCHEDULE
Project Advisory Group Meeting #1	COTA NextGen overview (and schedule) overview of Public Involvement Plan and Phase 1 outreach/engagement details; collect input on goals and data.	March 12, 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #2	Evaluation methods, needs assessment and Phase 1 outreach/engagement results.	May 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #3	Tier 1 screening results and Phase 2 outreach/engagement details.	July 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #4	Alternatives definition and refinement; Phase 2 outreach/engagement results.	September 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #5	Draft Plan and Phase 3 outreach/engagement details.	December 2015
Project Advisory Group Meeting #6	Final Plan, Funding/Financial Plan, implementation schedule and Phase 3 outreach/engagement results.	April 2016
Project Advisory Group Meeting #7		TBD, if needed
Project Advisory Group Meeting #8		TBD, if needed

Appendix B: Key Leader Interviews and Targeted Stakeholder Meetings

Task 3.1.6 Key Leader Interviews

We will schedule meetings with these individuals shortly after the project’s onset to inform them of the COTA NextGen effort, discuss how this project differs from other planning efforts, and collect insights into their expectations for transit service development in central Ohio. In some cases, we will meet with them again when recommendations emerge, to ensure they are informed and have the opportunity to provide their input on draft final recommendations.

The project team will conduct 30 interviews, most of which will be conducted individually, although some meetings may be conducted as small group discussions (one to five individuals), when appropriate. Twenty of the key leader interviews will be conducted during Phase 1; the remaining 10 will be repeat visits with interviewees later in the project as noted above. This list of candidates for interviews is included as Table 2.

Individual interviews will be kept confidential and thus individual comments will not be attributed to any particular individual or organization; key themes surfaced in the interviews will be summarized into a technical memo that will also include a list of the organizations participating in the process. The outcome will provide COTA more understanding of how community leadership perceives it, and what it will take for community leadership to embrace the community’s vision for transit in Columbus in the future. This input will help drive the development of our message strategy and the implementation plan.

Table 3 | Key Leader/Stakeholder Interviewees

	NAME	GROUP/ORGANIZATION
1.	Jordan Miller	5/3 Bank
2.	City of Columbus Councilmember Shannon Hardin	Transportation Committee Chair
3.	Gary Baker	Columbus City Schools Board
4.	Ben Kessler	City of Bexley
5.	Stephanie Hightower	Columbus Urban League
6.	Pastor Keith Troy	Baptist Ministerial Alliance
7.	Susan Tomasky	Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG)
8.	Suzanne Tolbert	Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation (COWIC)

9.	Elfi di Bella	YMCA
10.	Don Devere	Downtown developer, transit supporter
11.	Mark Wagenbrenner	Wagenbrenner Development
12.	John Wolfe	Columbus Dispatch
13.	Ty Marsh	Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO)
14.	Guy Worley	Columbus Downtown Development Corporation
15.	Chad Jester	Nationwide Insurance
16.	Alex Fischer	Columbus Partnership
17.	Janet E. Jackson	United Way of Central Ohio
18.	Marilyn Brown	Franklin County Board of Commissioners
19.	Anthony Trotman	Franklin County Job & Family Services
20.	Rep. Mike Curtin	Ohio House of Representatives (District 17)
21.	Brian Ellis	Nationwide Realty Investors
22.	Bill Riat	CASTO
23.	Bill Schottenstein	Arshot Investment Corporation
24.	Dawn Tyler Lee	United Way of Central Ohio
25.	Elaine Roberts	Columbus Regional Airport Authority
26.	Bill Conner Jr.	CAPA
27.	Frank Kass	Continental Realty
28.	John Waddy	King Lincoln District
29.	Margery Pizzuti	Goodwill

Task 3.1.7 Targeted Stakeholder Group Meetings

Young professionals, older adults and people with disabilities, faith leaders, new Americans, low income and other under-represented voices can be difficult to engage using traditional outreach methods. The project team will facilitate six targeted stakeholder group meetings with representatives of agencies who specialize in working with these target groups. We will facilitate these discussions during Phase 1. We will explain the COTA NextGen initiative, solicit their thoughts on needs and ideas, then ask for their assistance in promoting public meetings and hosting neighborhood sessions (more information on these below) to solicit input from these under-represented groups.

Targeted stakeholder groups are itemized in Table 4.

Table 4 | Targeted Stakeholder Meetings

	TARGET GROUP	CONTACTS	MEETING LOCATION (to be confirmed)
1.	Latino	Guadalupe Velasquez, Columbus Community Relations Commission; Lilleana Cavanaugh, Latino Affairs Commission; Columbus Catholic Services; Josue Vicente, Joe Mas	City of Columbus
2.	Somali, New Americans	Abdikhayr Soofe, Columbus Community Relations Commission; Beth Watkins, Columbus Community Refugee & Immigration Services; Jenny Acosta, Columbus Public Health	City of Columbus
3.	Low Income Populations	Judi Czarnicki, Southern Gateway; David Ciccone, United Way; Michael Wilkos, Columbus Foundation; Columbus Recreation Centers; Anthony Trotman, Franklin County Jobs & Family Services; Bo Chilton, Impact Ohio; Mark Mollenkopf, Mid-Ohio Foodbank; Ernest Perry, Hands On Central Ohio; Maude Hill, Homeport; Yvonne Hunnicutt, Human Services Chamber; Suzanne Coleman-Tolbert, COWIC	MORPC or Columbus Health Dept.
4.	African American Faith Leaders	Coordinate through Ministerial Alliance/Larry Price, Rev. Gilyard, Pastor Troy, Bishops Young, Clark and Ross, etc.	African American Church
5.	Seniors and People with Disabilities	AARP, Jobs and Family Services, Physicians CareConnection, Columbus Neighborhood Health Center; Columbus Public Health, MaryHaven, COTA Paratransit Advisory Committee, Center for Disability Empowerment	MORPC or Columbus Public Health Dept.
6.	Young Professionals	Columbus, suburban and United Way YP groups. Coordinate with Elissa Schneider, Kristen Easterday/Cols Chamber and Steve Michalovich/Dublin, others	Columbus Chamber of Commerce or Suburban Young Professional location

Appendix C

TEMPLATE INFORMED STAKEHOLDER/PUBLIC MEETING PLAN *DATE – DRAFT*

Overall Meeting Purpose/Expected Outcome

Purpose:

- Share and solicit input on:
 - xxx

Desired Outcomes:

- xxx

Desired Participants

- xxx

Meeting Format

- Presentation, facilitated Q&A and or discussion exercises
- Opportunities for input _____
- Online version? _____
- Comment period ends _____

DATE/TIME	GENERAL LOCATION	ADDRESS (building, name, room, street, zip)	CO-HOST NAME/CONTACT INFO (IF APPLICABLE) AND SITE CONTACT INFO
Week 1: Public Meeting #1 and #2	Accessible downtown location		
Week 1: Same Day Targeted Workshops	Same location as public meetings		
Week 1: Neighborhood Session #1	TBD - Target low income population area		
Week 2: Neighborhood Session #2	TBD – Target young professionals		
Week 2: Neighborhood Session #3	TBD – Target suburban area		

Pre-Meeting Notification – Starting xx, 2015; reminder push xx, 2015.

- Web announcement posted xx, 2015
- Postcard PDF out _____; Seek PAG assistance in notifying their constituencies.
- Hand distribute postcards _____
- Dispatch ad due _____/appears _____
- Columbus Post ad due _____/appears _____
- Columbus Underground ad due _____/appears _____
- Eblast out xx (electronic Constant Contact one-page newsletter) – ask PAG, and meeting co-hosts to forward to their lists; *Engage will forward to project database.*
- News release to COTA by _____
- Social media posts starting _____ for posting.

AD PLACEMENT	SIZE	COST*	TARGET DATE FOR AD	NOTES/ CONTACT INFO
Total		\$xxx		

Meeting Handouts (xx Is Lead)

1. Sign in sheet (xx)
2. Agenda (xx)
3. Comment sheets (xx)
4. "Day of" news release for local media, will create seven regional press releases to send to local media the day of the meetings (xx)

Set Up (xx Is Lead)

- Registration desk at front
- Theater seating for xxx (aisle in center) or tables
- Screen at front

Misc Logistics (xx Is Lead)

- Room rental and screen
- Sound system, if needed
- Directional signage
- Name tags (do your own)/registration supplies (Engage)
- Camera (Engage)
- Laptop and projector (Nelson\Nygaard)

Meeting Follow-Up (xx Is Lead)

- Scan sign in sheets and add to mailing/email lists
- Scan/tabulate comments
- Meeting summary

Media Relations (xx Is Lead)

- Protocol: Engage to draft news release for COTA review/approval by xx. COTA will finalize the news release format and distribute it through its media channels, and serve as agency spokesperson.
- COTA will arrange for COTA spokespeople at each public meeting, should it be decided that is warranted. If there is no COTA representative and there is media interest, Engage will xxx. Engage will provide COTA with talking points.

Appendix D - Detailed Work Plan

The following provides a step by step workflow of the public engagement plan. The purpose of this listing is to provide COTA with a clearer sense of how the individual outreach activities and events will be planned and executed. Dates are included for every task and are provided by month. Although COTA has requested specific dates, the study team is unable to provide this level of information for a study that will take more than 16 months to complete. In addition, scheduling activities with more specificity would be meaningless as minor changes in some activities (such as a change in the PAG committee meeting) or normal but unanticipated events like COTA staff going on vacation would require adjusting all dates in the project. By providing dates at a month by month, COTA is able to see the overall flow of the project and be assured that the study team has properly anticipated events, has allocated sufficient time to execute and provides sufficient detail for COTA to track progress.

Phase 1 Vision, Needs and Opportunities (and Project Start Up)

Task 3.1.1 Public Involvement Plan (January 2015)

Produced by Engage Public Affairs and Nelson\Nygaard (draft due January 20, 2015).

Task 3.1.2 Project Brand (January 2015)

- Nelson\Nygaard will draft the one-paragraph message.
- Engage Public Affairs will design a logo and tagline/slogan.
- COTA will review and select the preferred name, logo, and tagline
- Once the logo is selected, Engage will provide the templates described above, which will include direction on logo placement and font.

Task 3.1.3 Contact Database (Developed February 2015, updated periodically)

Engage Public Affairs will manage the contact database with assistance from PolicyWorks. “Develop” means collecting/consolidating/organizing existing COTA databases into a new, COTA NextGen Excel database. It will include tabs for the Project Advisory Group, Key Leader Interviews, Project Staff, and other stakeholders. “Maintain” means entering contacts provided by COTA and project team members, and correcting emails and addresses, to the extent reasonable, when emails or mailed materials are returned due to an inaccurate address. Engage will also add contact information for those who attend public meetings and/or sign up online for notifications of opportunities to provide public input.

- COTA will provide Engage any stakeholder databases currently available in Excel, including databases developed for the Bus Rapid Transit and Transit System Review outreach efforts the week of 2/2/15.
- Engage will add new contacts (project team, PAG, key leader interview list, community leaders identified during the development of PAG/stakeholder interview lists) and return draft 1 of the database to COTA one week after PAG and stakeholder interview lists are confirmed. This list will grow during the project; updated versions of the list will be available to COTA upon request.

- COTA will notify Engage of changes to contact information that come to COTA's attention.

Task 3.1.4 Project Website (February 2015)

- COTA will update its COTA Next Generation webpage to COTA NextGen.
- Nelson\Nygaard will provide COTA the website outline, proposed graphic elements and introductory copy for each webpage at the onset of the Plan.
- COTA will feedback within one week of receiving the information.
- Nelson\Nygaard and Engage will provide final copy and graphic elements to COTA.
- COTA Communications staff will program and post materials on the website so it is ready for launch prior to the first PAG meeting.
- Ongoing: COTA Communications staff will program and post materials on the website at least quarterly. Nelson/Nygaard and Engage will provide updated information as noted above.
- Ongoing: COTA and the project team will monitor blog comments and Nelson\Nygaard will take the lead in providing at least weekly postings regarding project progress and responding to public questions and comments. Engage and IBI will contribute and/or edit if needed.

Task 3.1.5 Project Advisory Group (Six Meetings Scheduled for 2015- 2016; additional meetings as needed)

Nelson\Nygaard will draft and present meeting content. Engage will facilitate the meetings. COTA and other team member may also present material, as appropriate.

- The project team submitted the draft PAG list to COTA. The project team will provide a draft invitation letter.
- COTA to confirm PAG invitation list and mail/email the invitations for PAG meeting #1. The project team will assist with follow up calls.
- Three weeks prior to each PAG meeting, Nelson\Nygaard will provide a draft agenda and meeting materials for COTA review and input, and determine which project team members will attend.
- On the day prior to each PAG meeting, the project team will meet with COTA to review and updates and finalize PAG materials.
- Engage will write the meeting summaries, to be reviewed by Nelson\Nygaard and provided to COTA within five business days after the PAG meeting.
- COTA will track RSVPs and PAG list updates, and inform the project team of status during weekly project calls leading up to the PAG meeting.
- After meeting #1, Engage will communicate meeting dates/times to PAG members at least three weeks in advance of each meeting.

Task 3.1.6 Community Leader Interviews (March 2015)

- The project team submitted a draft list of interview candidates for COTA review.
- Nelson\Nygaard submitted a draft interview discussion guide.

- COTA will provide feedback on both the interview guide and draft key leader interview candidates.
- IBI Group will draft an invitation for COTA review upon approval of the PAG invitation letter, as content will be similar.
- COTA will approve the draft invitation within two business days.
- IBI will then coordinate the interviews, to be conducted by IBI Group, Nelson\Nygaard and PolicyWorks.
- IBI Group will summarize the interview results in a draft report sent to COTA.
- COTA's comments are due back to the team one week later.
- The finalized report will be sent back to COTA one week after the team receives feedback from COTA. IBI Group will coordinate any database updates with Engage.

Task 3.1.7 Targeted Stakeholder Group Meetings (March 2015)

- Once COTA provides feedback due on the PAG invitation and community leader interview guide, Engage will draft the targeted stakeholder group meeting email invitation and interview guide for COTA review, as content will be similar to those earlier deliverables.
- COTA review the draft/final invitation.
- PolicyWorks will schedule the targeted stakeholder meetings and coordinate the invitation email lists with Engage. We will conduct these meetings between late February and late April, so feedback can be shared at the May 2015 PAG meeting. (To the extent room availability and schedule allows, we will attempt to complete these before the first series of public meetings so participants can help promote the meetings to their constituencies.)
- PolicyWorks will draft a meeting summary and Nelson\Nygaard will submit it to COTA within five business days of each targeted stakeholder meeting.
- COTA will provide comments on each meeting summary within one week.
- PolicyWorks will finalize the summary for submission to COTA in three business days.
- Engage will add the attendees to the contact database after each stakeholder meeting.

Task 3.1.8 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions (April 2015)

NN will draft preliminary meeting content (including the presentation and exhibits) and present it at the public meetings; Engage and IBI will review and provide input on meeting materials/edit/participate in presentations and/or facilitate as needed. PolicyWorks will coordinate public meeting and neighborhood session logistics (location, staffing), and will assist with notification and staffing the meetings. IBI will also staff neighborhood sessions as needed. Engage will write/edit/design notification and meeting materials for neighborhood sessions and public meetings.

- The Phase 1 public meeting/targeted workshop/neighborhood session plan draft will be submitted to ODOT six weeks before the first public meetings. COTA will have one week to review and provide comments.
- Upon approval of the public meeting plan, PolicyWorks will finalize meeting/session logistics with each venue.
- Upon approval of the public meeting plan, Engage will write and design notification materials, starting with the postcard. To be efficient in the editing/design/review process, Engage will submit the postcard copy/design to COTA first.
- COTA will provide feedback/direction on the postcard copy and design within three business days.
- Once the postcard is finalized, Engage will proceed with the copy/design of the print ad and eblast. The copy and design of these notification materials will be the same or very similar to the approved postcard, but adapted/edited to fit the parameters of the print ad requirements and e-blast HTML format.
- COTA will post the public meeting dates and locations on the COTA NextGen website three weeks before the public meetings/neighborhood sessions.
- Nelson\Nygaard will submit draft meeting materials (PowerPoint, agenda, comment form, fact sheet, sign in sheet) to COTA approximately three weeks before the public meetings/session (*this is dependent on availability of technical content).
- COTA comments are due five business days following submittal of the materials, which will then be finalized and ready one week before the public meeting/first neighborhood session.
- PolicyWorks will disseminate the postcards starting two weeks before the public meetings. PAG members will also be asked to distribute the postcards and/or forward a PDF version of the postcard to their constituents.
- Engage will distribute eblast notifications for the public meetings three times, starting two weeks prior to the public meetings/neighborhood sessions.
- Engage will distribute invitations to targeted workshop participants.
- A public meeting rehearsal will take place the week of the public meetings, to be attended by the entire team.
- Policy Works will draft a meeting summary which will be due to COTA no more than three weeks after the public meetings/neighborhood sessions, after the comment period closes (10 business days after public meetings). COTA will review, approve, and post the public meeting summaries on its website one week following the draft submittal.

Task 3.1.9 Short Project Video #1 (March 2015)

- COTA will authorize its video vendor to work with Engage.
- Engage and the vendor will provide COTA a proposed list of edits.
- COTA will provide comments within two business days.

- Engage/vendor will update the video.
- COTA will post the updated video on its website prior to the public meetings.

Task 3.1.10 Technical Memo (April 2015)

- Nelson\Nygaard will submit the draft memo to COTA four weeks following the public meetings and neighborhood sessions.
- COTA comments are due one week later.
- Final to COTA one week following COTA comments.
- Results will be presented to the PAG at its May 2015 meeting.
- COTA will post the technical memo on the COTA NextGen website.

Phase 1 Deliverables

- 1.1.1 Public Involvement Plan – January 2015
- 1.1.2 Project Brand – January 2015
 - 1.1.2.1 Three draft name/logo options for COTA review
 - 1.1.2.2 Logo, templates for Word and PowerPoint materials
- 1.1.3 Contact Database – February 2015 (updated periodically)
 - 1.1.3.1 Initial contacts database
 - 1.1.3.2 Updated based on project activity
- 1.1.4 Project Website – February 2015
 - 1.1.4.1 Outline for initial website design and content
 - 1.1.4.2 Implement initial website design and content
- 1.1.5 Project Advisory Group (PAG) – Six meetings scheduled over course of project; additional meetings may be added as needed (first meeting scheduled for March 12, 2015)
 - 1.1.5.1 List of candidates
 - 1.1.5.2 Final PAG invitation list and addresses in Excel
 - 1.1.5.3 Invitation
 - 1.1.5.4 Meeting agenda, materials
 - 1.1.5.5 Meeting summary
- 1.1.6 Community Leader Interviews – March 2015
 - 1.1.6.1 List of community leader interview candidates
 - 1.1.6.2 Draft/final community leader interview discussion guide
 - 1.1.6.3 Conduct interviews
 - 1.1.6.4 Draft/final summary of first 20 community leader interviews
- 1.1.7 Targeted Stakeholder Group Meetings – March 2015
 - 1.1.7.1 Draft/final list of targeted stakeholder group meetings

- 1.1.7.2 Draft/final small group interview discussion guide
- 1.1.7.3 Conduct/staff six small group meetings
- 1.1.7.4 Draft/final meeting summaries for each
- 1.1.8 Public Meetings, Neighborhood Sessions and Targeted Workshops – April 2015
 - 1.1.8.1 Draft/final public meeting plan
 - 1.1.8.2 Draft/final meeting content
 - 1.1.8.3 Draft/final notification materials
 - 1.1.8.4 Public meeting rehearsal
 - 1.1.8.5 Meeting summaries
- 1.1.9 Short Project Video #1 – March 2015
 - 1.1.9.1 Draft/final proposed edit of existing video
 - 1.1.9.2 Edited video
- 3.1.10 Technical Memo: Central Ohio's Ideas and Priorities for Transit Service Development – April 2015
 - 3.1.10.1 Draft/final technical memo

Phase 2 Define and Evaluate Alternatives

Task 3.2.1 Statistically Valid Public Opinion Poll – September 2015

IBI Group will oversee this effort. A professional research firm will administer the public opinion poll.

- IBI/Nelson\Nygaard to develop a draft survey instrument.
- Draft survey instruments will be shared with COTA at least six and up to eight weeks in advance of the survey administration for their review and comment.
- COTA will review/provide input on the survey instrument within one week.
- IBI Group will provide the final instrument to COTA one week later.
- Three weeks after the research is conducted, IBI Group will submit a draft research report for COTA review.
- COTA will provide feedback in one week.
- IBI will submit the final report one week later.

Task 3.2.2 Update Website with Online Survey – September 2015

- Nelson\Nygaard will work with an online engagement vendor to draft the content for the online survey. Engage will edit and coordinate this with COTA's project website. This will be submitted four weeks prior to the Phase 2 public meetings.
- COTA will review and provide comments within one week.
- Nelson\Nygaard and the vendor will finalize the online content one week later.

- Engage will coordinate with COTA to post the online engagement tool the week of the public meetings.
- Nelson\Nygaard and the vendor will provide a summary on the online engagement two weeks after the online engagement period closes.
- Nelson\Nygaard and Engage will draft an update for the COTA NextGen website four weeks prior to the Phase 2 public meetings.
- COTA will review and provide comments in one week.
- Engage will finalize the website content and provide it to COTA in three business days so that updated info is posted on the website three weeks in advance of the public meetings.

Task 3.2.3 Public Meetings, Targeted Stakeholder Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions – September/October 2015

- The Phase 2 public meeting/targeted workshop/neighborhood session plan draft will be submitted to ODOT six weeks before the public meetings.
- COTA will have one week to review and provide comments.
- Upon approval of the public meeting plan, PolicyWorks will finalize meeting/session logistics with each venue.
- Upon approval of the public meeting plan, Engage will write and design notification materials, starting with the postcard. To be efficient in the editing/design/review process, Engage will submit the postcard copy/design to COTA first.
- COTA will provide feedback/direction on the postcard copy and design within three business days.
- Once the postcard is finalized, Engage will proceed with the copy/design of the print ad and eblast. The copy and design of these notification materials will be the same or very similar to the approved postcard, but adapted/edited to fit the parameters of the print ad requirements and e-blast HTML format.
- COTA will post the public meeting dates and locations on the COTA NextGen website three weeks before the public meetings/neighborhood sessions.
- Nelson\Nygaard will submit draft meeting materials (PowerPoint, agenda, comment form, fact sheet, sign in sheet) to COTA approximately three weeks before the public meetings/session (*this is dependent on availability of technical content).
- COTA comments are due five business days following submittal of the materials, which will then be finalized and ready one week before the public meeting/first neighborhood session.
- PolicyWorks will disseminate the postcards starting two weeks before the public meetings. PAG members will also be asked to distribute the postcards and/or forward a PDF version of the postcard to their constituents.
- Engage will distribute eblast notifications for the public meetings three times, starting two weeks prior to the public meetings/neighborhood sessions.

- Engage will distribute invitations to targeted workshop participants.
- A public meeting rehearsal will take place the week of the public meetings, to be attended by the entire team.
- Policy Works will draft a meeting summary which will be due to COTA no more than three weeks after the public meetings/neighborhood sessions, after the comment period closes (10 business days after public meetings). COTA will review, approve, and post the public meeting summaries on its website one week following approval.

Task 3.2.4 Short Project Video #2 (August 2015)

- Engage will submit a draft script/video concept to COTA.
- COTA will provide comments within one week.
- Engage will finalize the draft script one week later.
- Upon COTA approval three business days later, Engage will proceed with production.
- COTA will post the video on its website.

Task 3.2.5 Technical Memo (November 2015)

- Nelson\Nygaard will submit the draft memo to COTA four weeks following the completion of the public opinion poll, public meetings, workshops, neighborhood sessions and online engagement.
- COTA comments due are due one week later.
- Final to COTA one week following COTA comments.
- Results will be presented to the PAG at the December meeting.
- COTA will post the technical memo on the COTA NextGen website

Phase 2 Deliverables

- 3.2.1 Statistically Valid Public Opinion Poll (September 2015)
- 3.3.3 Update Project Website with Online Survey (September/October 2015)
 - 3.3.3.1 Draft/final website content updates
 - 3.3.3.2 Draft/final online survey content
 - 3.3.3.3 Summary of input collected through the online survey
- 3.3.4 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions (September/October 2015)
 - 3.3.4.1 Public meeting plan
 - 3.3.4.2 Draft/final meeting content
 - 3.3.4.3 Draft/final meeting notifications
 - 3.3.4.4 Public meeting rehearsal
 - 3.3.4.5 Conduct public meetings
 - 3.3.4.6 Draft/final meeting summaries
 - 3.3.4.7 Draft/final meeting content

- 3.3.4.8 Draft/final notification materials
- 3.3.4.9 Public meeting rehearsal
- 3.3.4.10 Meeting summaries
- 3.3.5 Short Project Video #2 (August 2015)
 - 3.3.5.1 Draft/final script/concept
 - 3.3.5.2 Video
- 3.3.6 Technical Memo: Central Ohio's Ideas and Priorities for Transit Service Development (November 2015)
 - 3.3.6.1 Draft/final memo

Phase 3 Recommendations and Implementation Plan

Task 3.3.1 Update Website and Online Survey (January 2016)

- Nelson\Nygaard will work with an online engagement vendor to draft the content for the online survey. Engage will edit and coordinate this with COTA's project website. This will be submitted four weeks prior to the Phase 3 public meetings.
- COTA will review and provide comments within one week.
- Nelson\Nygaard and the vendor will finalize the online content one week later.
- Engage will coordinate with COTA to post the online engagement tool the week of the public meetings.
- Nelson\Nygaard and the vendor will provide a summary on the online engagement two weeks after the online engagement period closes.
- Nelson\Nygaard and Engage will draft an update for the COTA NextGen website four weeks prior to the Phase 3 public meetings.
- COTA will review and provide comments in one week.
- Engage will finalize the website content and provide it to COTA in three business days so that updated info is posted on the website three weeks in advance of the public meetings.

Task 3.3.2 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions (March 2015)

- The Phase 3 public meeting/targeted workshop/neighborhood session plan draft will be submitted to ODOT six weeks before the public meetings.
- COTA will have one week to review and provide comments.
- Upon approval of the public meeting plan, PolicyWorks will finalize meeting/session logistics with each venue.
- Upon approval of the public meeting plan, Engage will write and design notification materials, starting with the postcard. To be efficient in the editing/design/review process, Engage will submit the postcard copy/design to COTA first.

- COTA will provide feedback/direction on the postcard copy and design within three business days.
- Once the postcard is finalized, Engage will proceed with the copy/design of the print ad and eblast. The copy and design of these notification materials will be the same or very similar to the approved postcard, but adapted/edited to fit the parameters of the print ad requirements and e-blast HTML format.
- COTA will post the public meeting dates and locations on the COTA NextGen website three weeks before the public meetings/neighborhood sessions.
- Nelson\Nygaard will submit draft meeting materials (PowerPoint, agenda, comment form, fact sheet, sign in sheet) to COTA approximately three weeks before the public meetings/session (*this is dependent on availability of technical content).
- COTA comments are due five business days following submittal of the materials, which will then be finalized and ready one week before the public meeting/first neighborhood session.
- PolicyWorks will disseminate the postcards starting two weeks before the public meetings. PAG members will also be asked to distribute the postcards and/or forward a PDF version of the postcard to their constituents.
- Engage will distribute eblast notifications for the public meetings three times, starting two weeks prior to the public meetings/neighborhood sessions.
- Engage will distribute invitations to targeted workshop participants.
- A public meeting rehearsal will take place the week of the public meetings, to be attended by the entire team.
- PolicyWorks will draft a meeting summary which will be due to COTA no more than three weeks after the public meetings/neighborhood sessions, after the comment period closes (10 business days after public meetings). COTA will review, approve, and post the public meeting summaries on its website one week following approval.

Task 3.3.3 Community Leader Follow-On Interviews (February/March 2015)

- Nelson\Nygaard will submit a draft interview guide to COTA for review.
- COTA will provide input in one week.
- Nelson\Nygaard will finalize the interview guide.
- IBI Group will coordinate the interviews; IBI, Nelson\Nygaard and PolicyWorks will conduct the interviews.
- IBI Group will summarize the interview results in a draft report sent to COTA.
- COTA's comments are due back to the team one week later.
- The finalized report will be sent back to COTA one week after the team receives feedback from COTA. IBI Group will coordinate any database updates with Engage.

Task 3.3.4 Short Video #3 (March 2015)

- Engage will submit a draft script/video concept after the third round of public meetings have been documented.
- COTA will provide comments within one week.
- Engage finalize the draft script one week later.
- Upon COTA approval three business days later, Engage will proceed with production.
- COTA will post the video on its website in April, at the completion of the COTA NextGen study.

Task 3.3.4 Technical Memo: Central Ohio’s COTA NextGen Plan (March 2015)

- Nelson\Nygaard will submit the draft memo to COTA four weeks following the completion of the public meetings, workshops, neighborhood sessions and online engagement.
- COTA comments due are due one week later.
- Final to COTA one week following COTA comments.
- Results will be presented to the PAG at its April, 2015 meeting.
- COTA will post the technical memo on the COTA NextGen website

Phase 3 Deliverables

- 3.3.1 Update Website and Online Survey (January 2015)
 - 3.3.1.1 Draft/final online survey content
 - 3.3.1.2 Draft/final website content updates
 - 3.3.1.3 Draft/final online survey content
- 3.3.2 Public Meetings, Targeted Workshops and Neighborhood Sessions (February/March 2016)
 - 3.3.2.1 Public meeting plan
 - 3.3.2.2 Draft/final meeting content
 - 3.3.2.3 Draft/final meeting notifications
 - 3.3.2.4 Public meeting rehearsal
 - 3.3.2.5 Conduct public meetings
 - 3.3.2.6 Draft/final meeting summaries
 - 3.3.2.7 Draft/final meeting content
 - 3.3.2.8 Draft/final notification materials
 - 3.3.2.9 Public meeting rehearsal
 - 3.3.2.10 Meeting summaries
- 3.3.3 Community Leader Follow-On Interviews (March 2016)
 - 3.3.3.1 List of community leader interview candidates
 - 3.3.3.2 Draft/final community interview discussion guide

- 3.3.3.3 Conduct interviews
- 3.3.3.4 Draft/final summary of 10 stakeholder interviews
- 3.3.4 Short Project Video #3 (March 2016)
 - 3.3.4.1 Draft/final script/concept
 - 3.3.4.2 Video
- 3.3.5 Technical Memo March 2016
 - 3.3.5.1 Draft/final memo

Task 3.4 Communication Toolkit

Task 3.4.1 Presentations (Ongoing – First Materials, March 2015)

- Nelson\Nygaard submit the draft to COTA.
- COTA comments due back four business days later.
- Engage will edit and provide images if needed, with a final version to COTA.
- Edits will be made to the presentation following each PAG meeting for a total of six revisions. Revisions will be due to COTA one week after each PAG meeting.
- COTA comments will be due on each presentation change one week later.
- Nelson\Nygaard will provide the final version one week later.

Task 3.4.2 NextGen Briefing/Fact Book (May 2015)

Nelson\Nygaard will provide an outline and will work with IBI to draft content for the COTA Briefing/Fact Book. Engage will edit copy and design the book consistent with the project brand and messaging. COTA will provide related content developed through the TSR and or other planning processes, and coordinate with MORPC to provide relevant demographic/trend data developed through the Insight 2050 process.

- Nelson\Nygaard to provide first draft to COTA.
- COTA comments due back one week later.
- Final version due to COTA five days after receipt of COTA's comments.

Task 3.4.3 Social Media (Ongoing)

- Engage will provide COTA social media-ready versions of all public notification materials two weeks prior to each public meeting/neighborhood session.
- Engage will provide COTA suggestions on social media posts when new information is posted on the COTA NextGen website.
- COTA Communications will post the content on its social media sites.

Task 3.4.4 Media Relations (Ongoing)

COTA will be the media spokesperson for the project.

- Engage will draft a news release and talking points three weeks prior to each round of public meetings/neighborhood sessions.

- COTA will finalize, format and release the information to its media contacts two weeks prior to each rounds of public meetings.
- Engage will suggest other opportunities for COTA to seek media coverage, such as when decision milestones are reached or new, particularly newsworthy information is posted online.

Task 3.4.5 Coordination with MORPC and City of Columbus (Quarterly, starting with December 2014)

MORPC will coordinate efforts between these initiatives, convening meetings as needed and sharing public comments. We anticipate MORPC will host at least quarterly coordination meetings.

Task 3.4.6 Internal Communication (Ongoing)

The project team and COTA will hold a weekly conference call to report progress and share information. On the day prior to PAG and/or public meetings, the project team will convene for at least two hours to share progress updates, as well as hold strategic planning discussions on COTA NextGen development.

Task 5.1.3 Public Involvement Documentation (Ongoing)

Nelson\Nygaard will manage all project documentation with assistance from Engage Public Affairs, IBI Group and PolicyWorks. COTA will notify the Public Involvement Team of presentations and associated feedback so those can also be tracked and included in the appendix.