
COTA Board of Trustees Extends Free CBUS Fares for Additional Year

Task Force to be Established to Explore Sustainable CBUS Funding Sources

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Today the Board of Trustees of the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) voted to extend free fares on the CBUS[®] through May 1, 2016.

Since its inception on May 5, 2014, the CBUS, Columbus' Downtown Circulator, has provided smart, convenient, user-friendly service to residents, employers and visitors in the downtown area. Current ridership exceeds 490,000 trips and will surpass 500,000 by its first anniversary. Free passenger fares contributed significantly to that ridership success. COTA launched CBUS with the endorsement of its Board of Trustees to support public and private sector efforts to attract development, new businesses, residents and visitors to the burgeoning core of the city.

Financial commitments from several organizations in the downtown area are making possible the continuation of CBUS with free fares. Pledges to date total \$133,000, which exceeds COTA's target of \$130,000 and is half of the \$260,000 goal. A number of additional pledges are expected to be finalized within the next few weeks.

In addition to securing this one-year funding, COTA and the CBUS funding partners will establish a task force to identify and implement sources of sustainable revenue to provide funding to support CBUS operations on a continuing basis.

"COTA's goals are aligned with the goals of this community, and the CBUS is a perfect example of this alignment," said Curtis Stitt, COTA President/CEO. "Maintaining free fares makes it easy for visitors to use the service, and encourages frequent trips between Downtown, the Short North and the Brewery District, while spurring economic activity."

"We know that the ability to easily get around the city is vital to a positive visitor experience, so we're very pleased that the CBUS Circulator will remain free," said Brian Ross, Experience Columbus president and CEO. "The circulator is a tremendous asset to our residents and the more than 37.6 million visitors who come to Columbus each year for leisure trips, conventions, meetings and sporting events."

Ross spoke in favor of the free fare resolution today at the COTA Board of Trustees meeting.

For more information, please visit COTA.com or contact COTA at (614) 228-1776.

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About the CBUS

The CBUS, which launched on May 5, 2014, is a circulator service that serves downtown Columbus and adjacent neighborhoods. The CBUS serves downtown employees, residents of downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods, and visitors wishing to make connections between the residential districts and employment centers and dining, nightlife, cultural offerings, parks, hotels and convention facilities.



To request this information in an alternative format, call (614) 228-1776.