
COTA Joins Sen. Sherrod Brown to Call for Restored Funding for CMAX

COLUMBUS, OH—Today Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) President/CEO Curtis Stitt stood with U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown in Columbus to call for restored funding for critical, shovel-ready transportation infrastructure projects like COTA's CMAX Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line. The annual transportation funding bill would slash spending for the CMAX project, stalling development of the BRT line linking Downtown Columbus and Westerville.

"To remain on top of the world's economy, we need to invest in a world-class infrastructure. That's not just roads and bridges – it also means investing in better transit service," said Brown, ranking member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. "That's why it's critical that we invest in projects like the CMAX Bus Rapid Transit project. CMAX will provide much faster transit options for central Ohioans – connecting businesses, workers, and customers, while spurring investment to grow our economy. This project should be a home run—but funding for CMAX is in jeopardy. When we return to Washington next week, I am going to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to push for funding for the CMAX project."

At the site of a proposed CMAX stop on Cleveland Avenue, Brown and Stitt stood with Janet Tressler Davis, president and CEO of the Westerville Area Chamber of Commerce; and JM Rayburn, a local rider; to call for full-funding of the project.

"The CMAX line will provide much needed transportation improvements in the Northeast Corridor from downtown Columbus to Westerville," Stitt said. "We look forward to joining forces with Senator Brown to inform Congress of the value and benefits of CMAX to the central Ohio community, and secure funding needed to advance this important project."

"The COTA BRT is a great added benefit to our central Ohio businesses and our workforce," Tressler Davis said. "The BRT buses will provide faster, reliable and more direct service traveling through our communities."

"As a transit advocate, rider and taxpayer, I expect investment in quality transportation," Rayburn said. "The CMAX will bring Columbus one step closer to becoming a world-class city with a world-class public transportation system."

The CMAX BRT project will connect residents to major employment centers, medical facilities and educational institutions – providing critical service to over 211,000 residents while encouraging economic development in the corridor. While the House's annual transportation appropriations bill would provide funding for CMAX, the Senate proposal would dramatically decrease spending for the entire grant program, cutting CMAX's funding.

COTA worked closely with a number of community stakeholders during the design and development of the project. COTA worked with the cities of Columbus and Westerville, Franklin County, Clinton and Blendon Townships, the Village of Minerva Park, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission. COTA also worked with employers, including Nationwide, Abbot Laboratories, and OhioHealth. For more information please visit cotabrt.com.

