

COTA

SHORT RANGE TRANSIT PLAN

2027-2031

Public Workshops

April 27–May 1, 2026



Hello!



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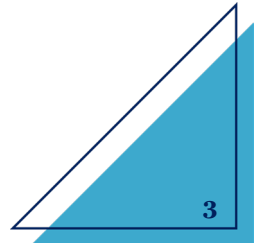
**Marie Keister,
APR, AICP**

MurphyEpson

**Communication
& Engagement**

Today's Agenda

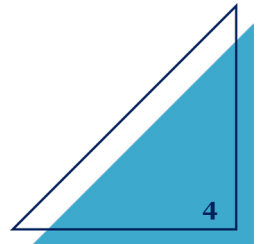
- 1** Introductions
- 2** What is the Short-Range Transit Plan?
- 3** Process Overview
- 4** Major Findings and Service Proposals
- 5** Key Benefits
- 6** Feedback and Next Steps



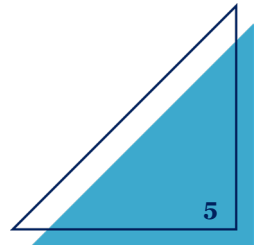
Meeting Format

Presentation, followed by break-out to information stations (open-house format)

Please hold questions for the information stations, where we can address your specific needs



What is the Short-Range Transit Plan?



What is the Short-Range Transit Plan?

- Provides **year-by-year service investment recommendations** for 2027–2031
- Grounded in the **LinkUS vision**, rider input and community and jurisdictional engagement
- A **fiscally responsible investment strategy** for COTA's transit services



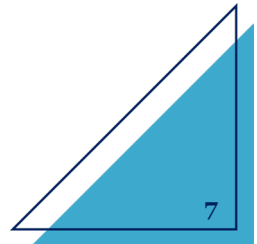
Why is the SRTP important?

Guides investment decisions over the next five years

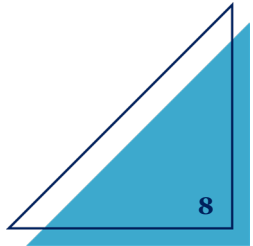
Provides transparency and accountability to the Board, the public and partner jurisdictions

Responds to post-pandemic travel patterns, focusing resources where demand and growth are strongest

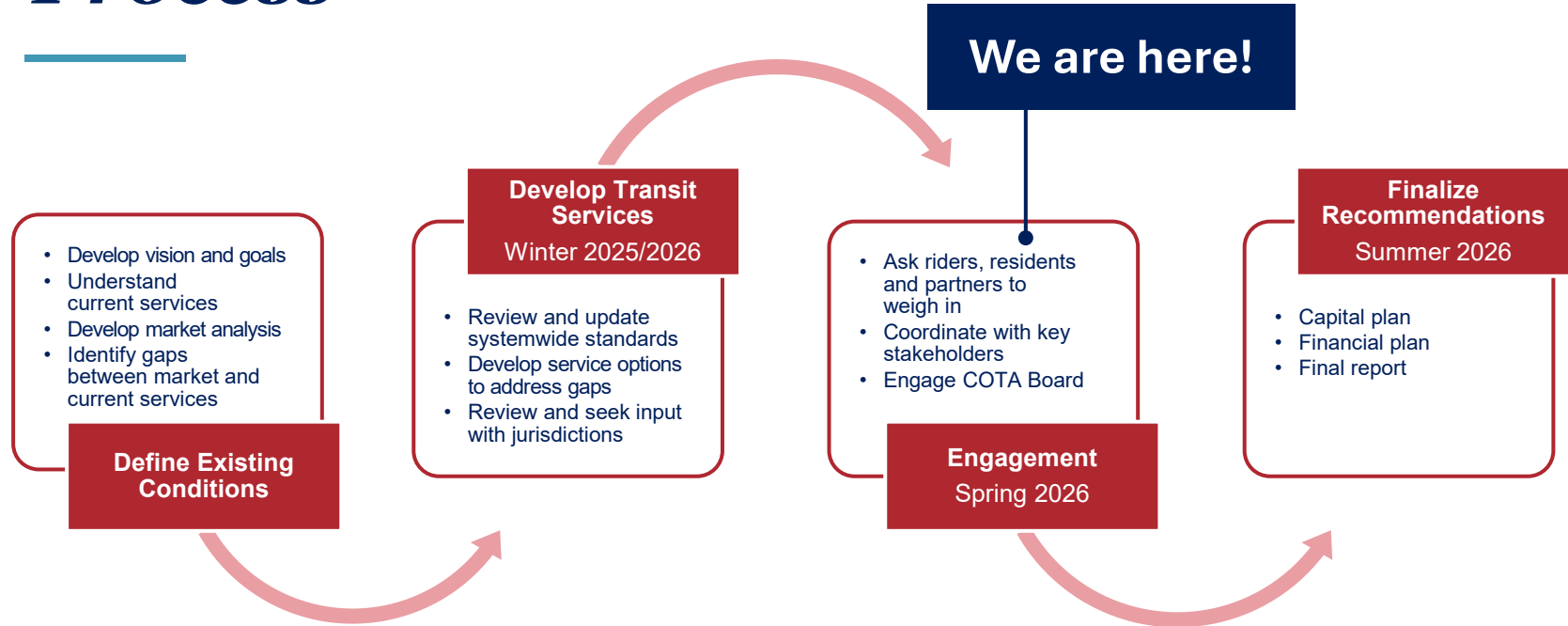
Positions COTA for success under LinkUS, while remaining realistic about capacity and timing



Process Overview



Process



After plan adoption, COTA will continue to seek public input during the service change process for implementation.

Today's Proposals

DEVELOPED THROUGH

- Data analysis
- Review of existing services
- COTA employee feedback
- Municipal partner feedback
- **YOU**

While today's proposals represent our best thinking, they require your input to help us understand how to improve them.

Feedback from today will be used to refine and update these proposals.

How to Engage

- In-person public workshops
- Virtual public workshop
- Online self-guided review and feedback
 - cota.com/srtp
 - Accepting comments now through May 15

IN-PERSON

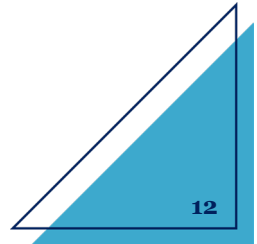
- **April 27**
5:30-7:30 PM
Mid-Ohio Farm on the Hilltop
140 N Wheatland Ave
Columbus, OH 43223
- **April 28**
5:30-7:30 PM
Bob Crane Community Center
3200 Tremont Rd
Upper Arlington, OH 43221
- **April 29**
11:30-1:30 PM
COTA Board Room
33 N High St
Columbus, OH 43215
- **April 29**
5:30-7:30 PM
Huntington Empowerment Center
780 Mt. Vernon Ave
Columbus, OH 43205
- **April 30**
5:30-7:30 PM
Columbus Metropolitan Library – Driving Park Branch
1422 E Livingston Ave
Columbus, OH 43205

VIRTUAL

- **May 1**
1:00-2:30 PM
via Teams at bit.ly/SRTP-Virtual

Existing Conditions

Understanding how well COTA service meets community needs today



Existing Conditions

Market Analysis

- Where transit demand exists, regardless of whether service is currently provided.



Service Analysis

- How well COTA's current services are meeting rider needs.



Service Gaps & Opportunities

- Where service doesn't match demand—and where changes can deliver better results.

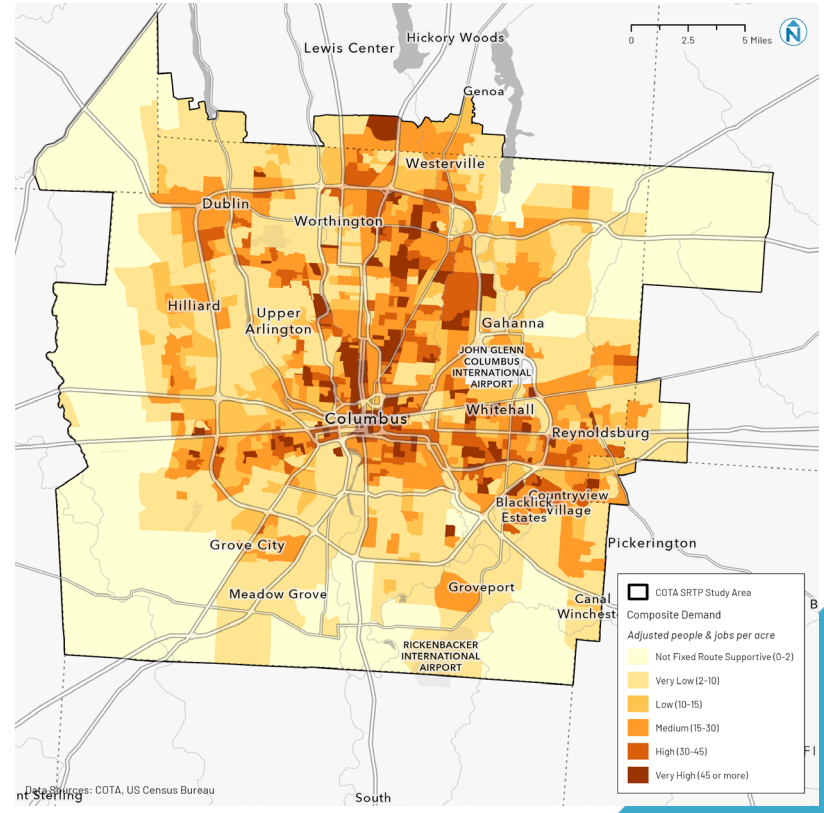
Existing Conditions

Market Analysis

- Population density analysis
 - General population
 - Zero-car households
 - Low-income households
 - Minority residents
- Employment density analysis
- Regional travel flows



Composite Demand



Existing Conditions

38 Fixed Lines

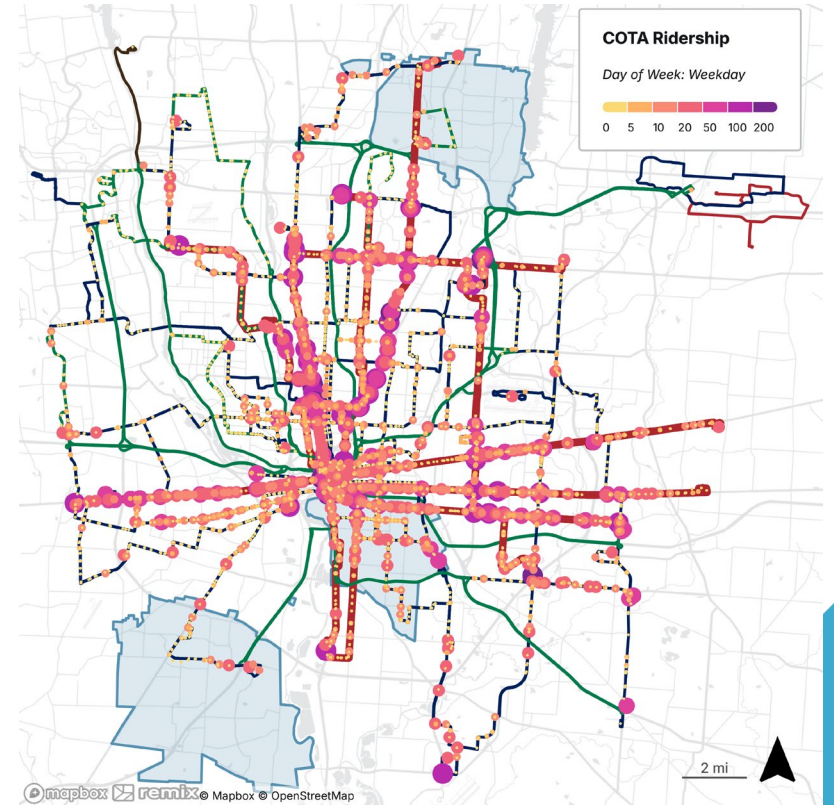
- 1 CMAX- Light BRT line
- 6 Frequent local lines
- 16 Standard local lines
- 14 Rush hour lines
- 1 Zoo Bus

3 COTA/Plus zones

Systemwide ridership has increased steadily since 2021

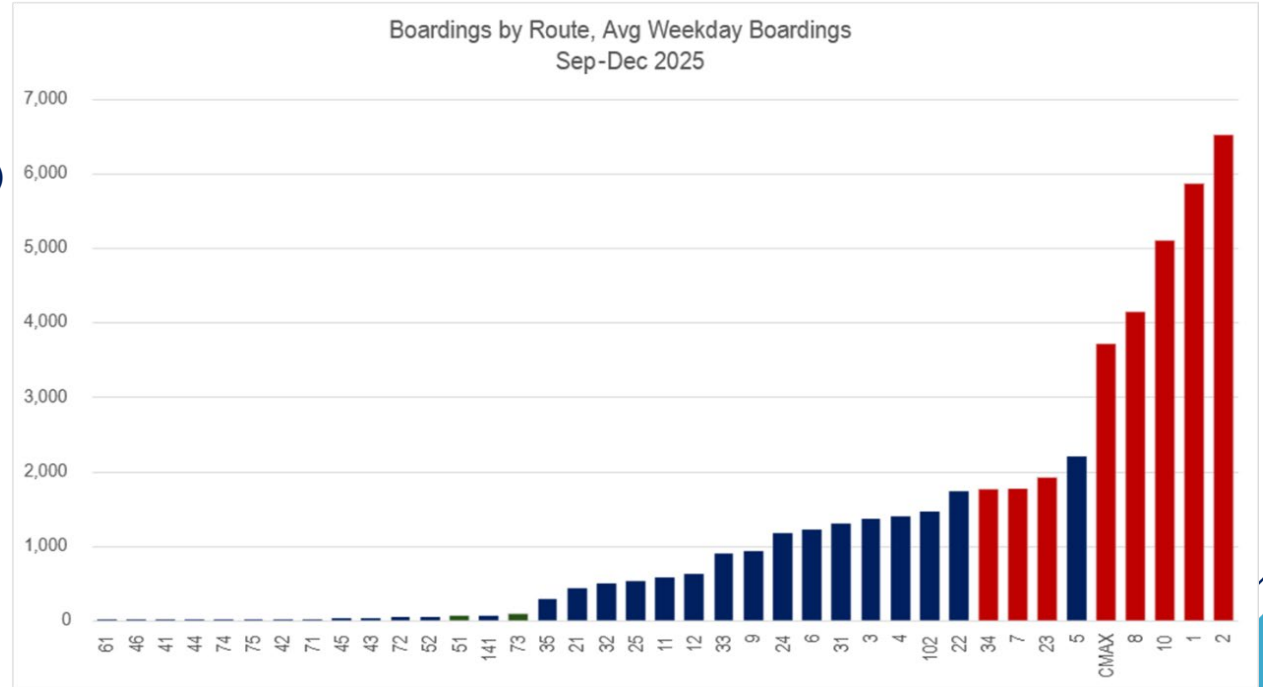
- 2024 – 11.1M boardings
- 2025 – 12.4M boardings

Daily Ridership



Ridership by Line (Sep-Dec 2025)

- Frequent service and CMAX are top performing routes
 - 23 and 34 (crosstown)
- Collectively, rush hour lines carry 268 passengers per day
 - 0.6% of systemwide ridership, 10% of peak vehicles
- 43,572 systemwide boardings per average weekday

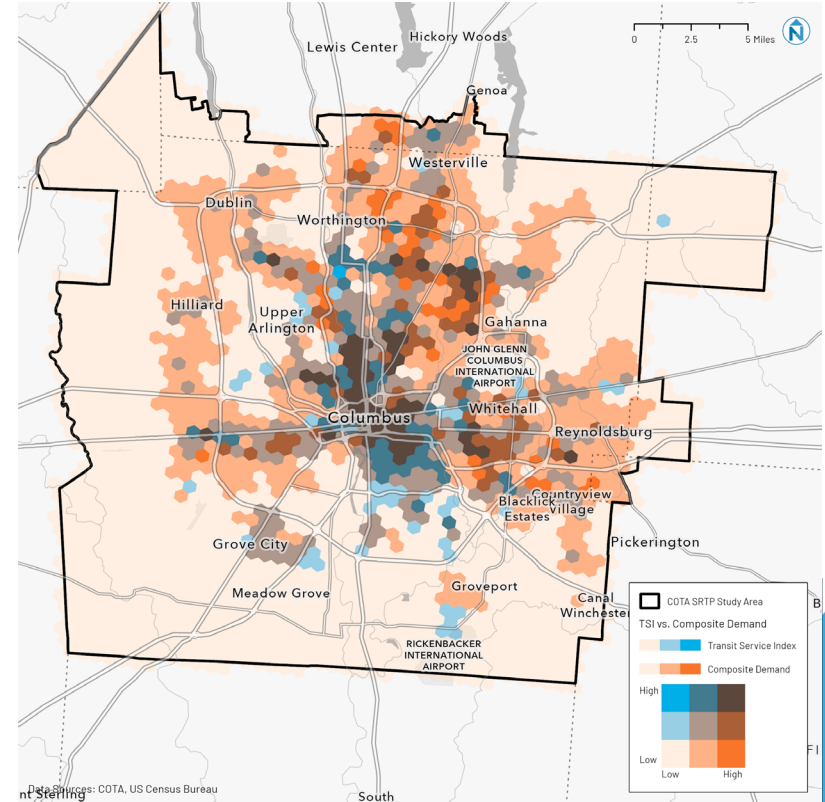


Existing Conditions

Gap Analysis

- Brightest orange areas have highest transit demand and lowest transit service
- Brightest blue areas have more transit service and less demand

Supply vs. Demand



Major Themes from the Existing Conditions Analysis

Ridership is more evenly spread throughout the day

Rush Hour lines underperform in comparison to other service types

Long and complex lines reduce reliability, affecting rider trust and usability

Service simplification can create better connections

High ridership corridors represent the strongest opportunities for reinvestment

Current network must adapt to welcome future BRT corridors

Service Recommendations

Overview of Service Recommendations

The SRTP Proposes a 30% Service Increase Over the Next 5 Years

Increase frequency & span of service

- **Expand the frequent service network** by upgrading high-performing lines or extending existing frequent lines into new areas
- **Improve frequency throughout the week** with a focus on improved weekend frequency
- **Expand hours of operation** including introducing a 24-hour network on core lines

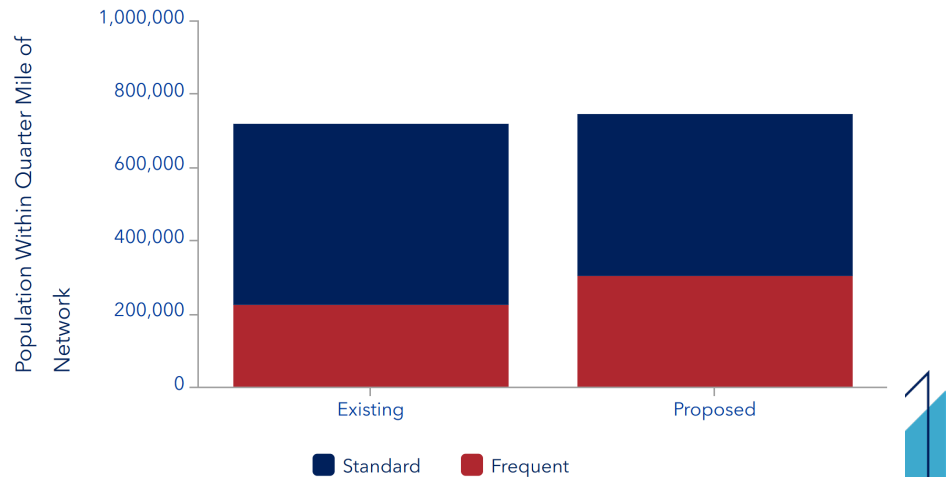
Realign some existing services

- **Refocus transit network** into high demand or underserved communities
- **Introduce up to three new COTA//Plus zones**, selected from five evaluated locations

Access to All Day and Frequent Service Increases

- People that live within walking distance of Frequent lines increases by 35% over current levels
 - 39% for low-income and minority residents
 - 29% for zero-car households
- People that work within walking distance of Frequent transit increases by 9%
- People living within walking distance of quality transit (Frequent + Standard) increases by 4%

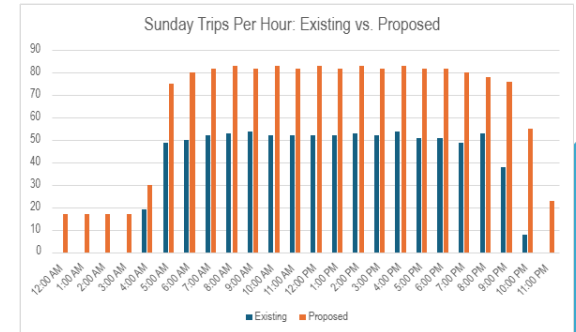
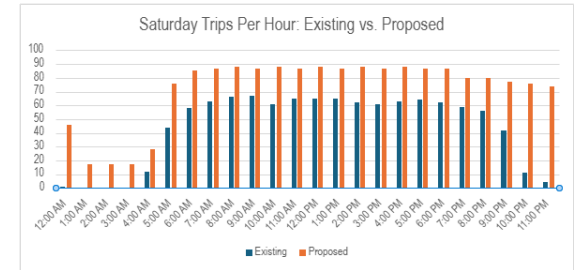
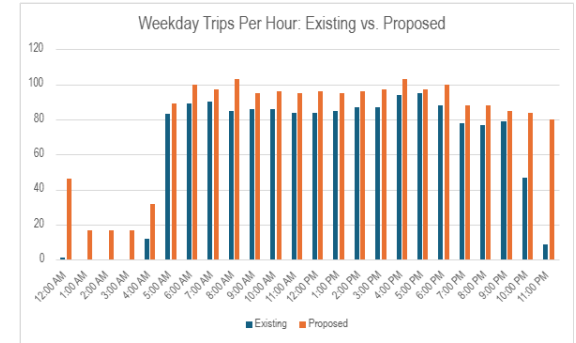
Population Access to the All-Day Network: Existing vs. Proposed



More Service, All Day, Everyday

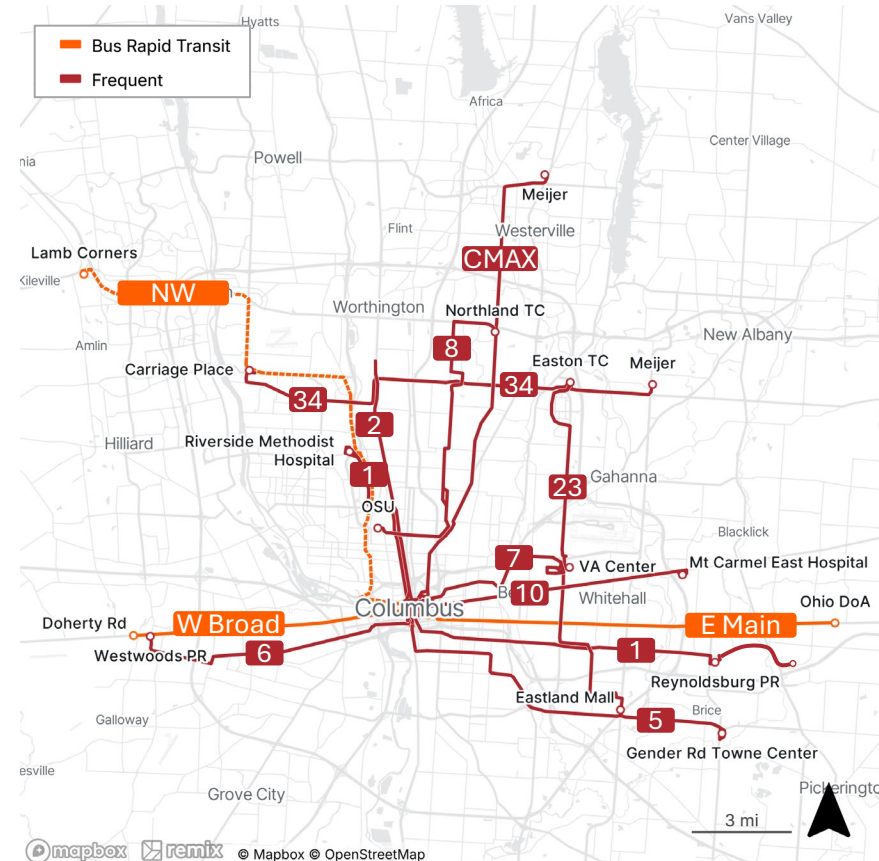
- **25%** more trips on weekdays
- **64%** more trips on Saturdays
- **74%** more trips on Sundays

The proposed network operates more trips on Sunday than the current network operates on each weekday today.



Expand the Frequent Network

- Builds on the existing frequent network, which today includes CMAX and Lines 1, 2, 7, 8, 10, 23 and 34
- Upgrades additional high-performing routes to frequent service, including Lines 5 and 6
- Extends frequent, all-day service into new areas by expanding coverage on Lines 1 and 34



Improve Frequency throughout the Week

| Frequency Improvements | Lines Impacted |
|---|---------------------------|
| Improve weekend frequency from every 30-min to 15-min | Lines 1, 2N, 10E* |
| Improve weekend frequency from every 30-min to 20-min | Lines 5E, 6, 7, 8, 23, 34 |
| Improve weekend frequency from every 60-min to 30-min | Lines 3, 4, 9, 24, 30 |
| Improve weekday frequency from every 60-min to 30-min | Lines 9, 25, 32, 35 |

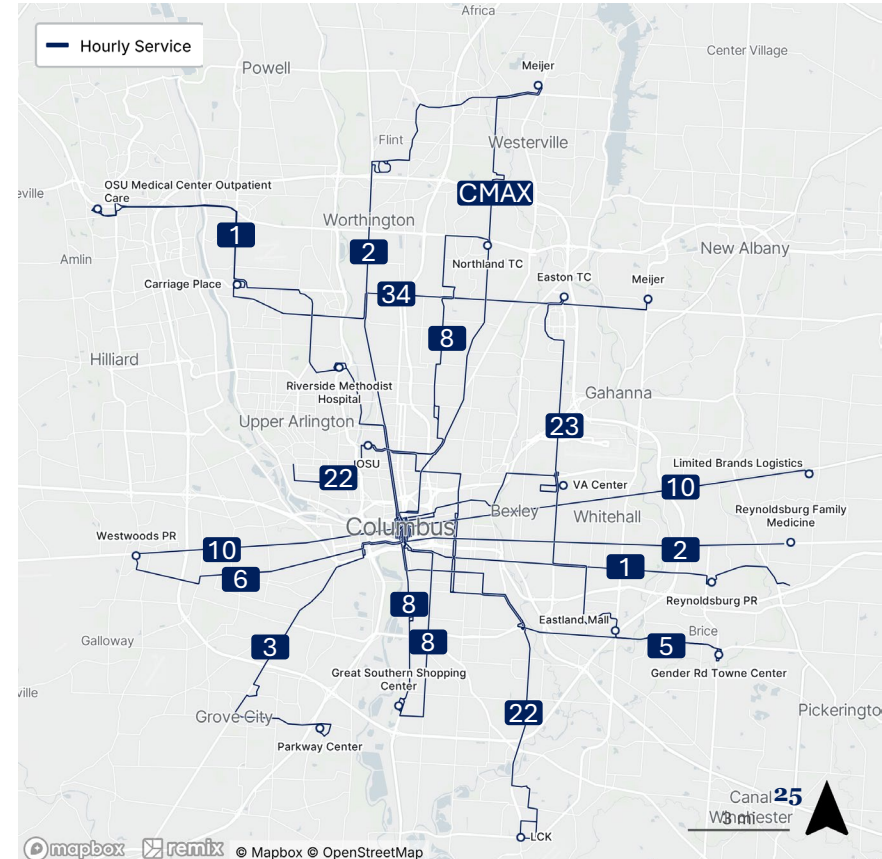
*CMAx already meets this standard

For Bus Riders, Frequency is Vital to Access

- Improve weekend frequency on **14 lines** so service is consistent and useful throughout the week
- Upgrade four hourly lines to 30-min frequency on weekdays

Expand Operating Hours

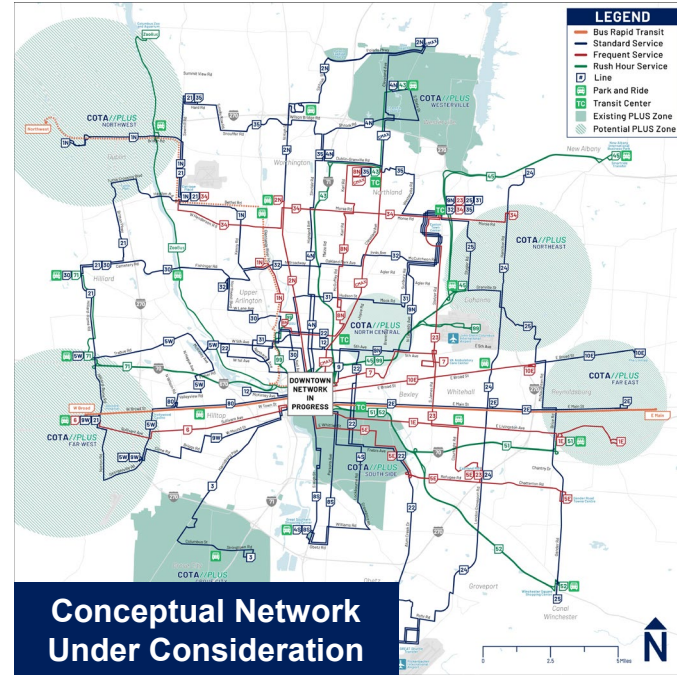
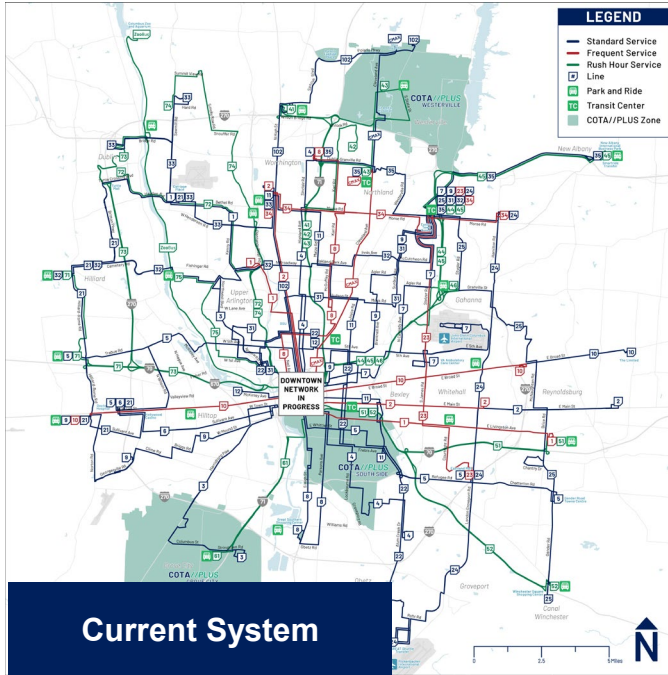
- Introduce a 24-hour core transit network on key lines, providing reliable around-the-clock service for essential workers, late-night travel, and non-traditional schedules
 - 1, 2, 3, 5 (East), 6, 7, 8, 10, 22, 23, 34, CMAX
- Expand operating hours on all other lines to improved minimum standards to ensure consistent span and quality systemwide



Proposed Alignment Changes

Updates to COTA's service footprint

Proposed Changes: Systemwide

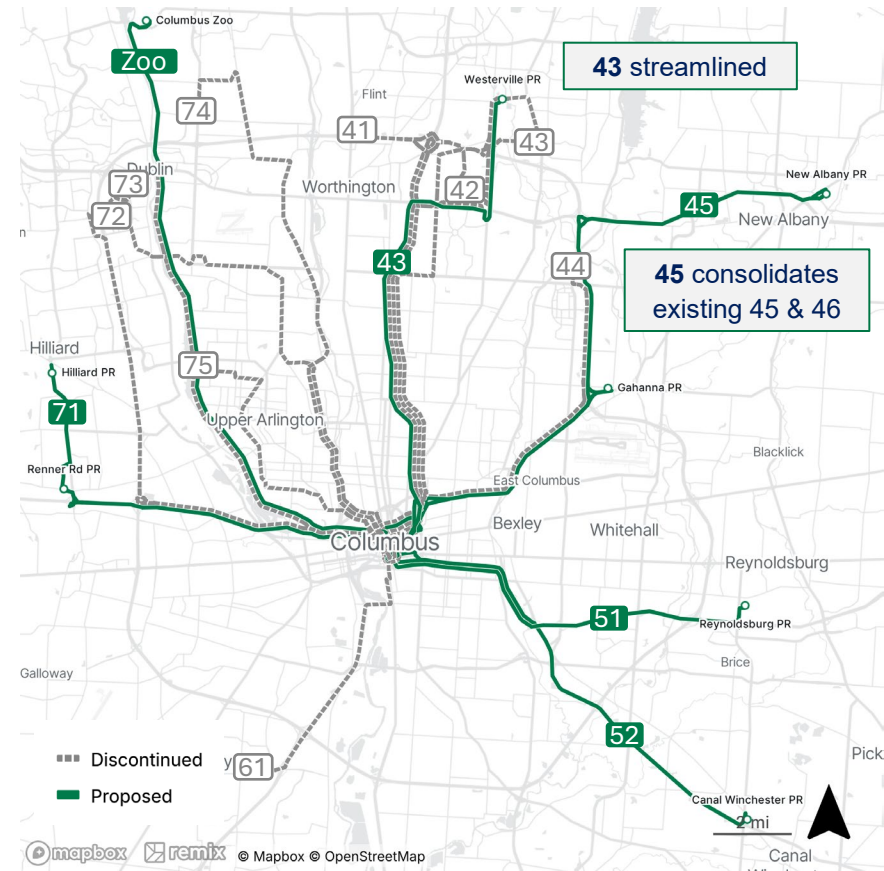


Not all proposed changes will be implemented. Improvements will be prioritized based on public feedback.

Proposed Changes: Reallocate Rush Hour Resources

Reallocate Underperforming Peak-Only Service

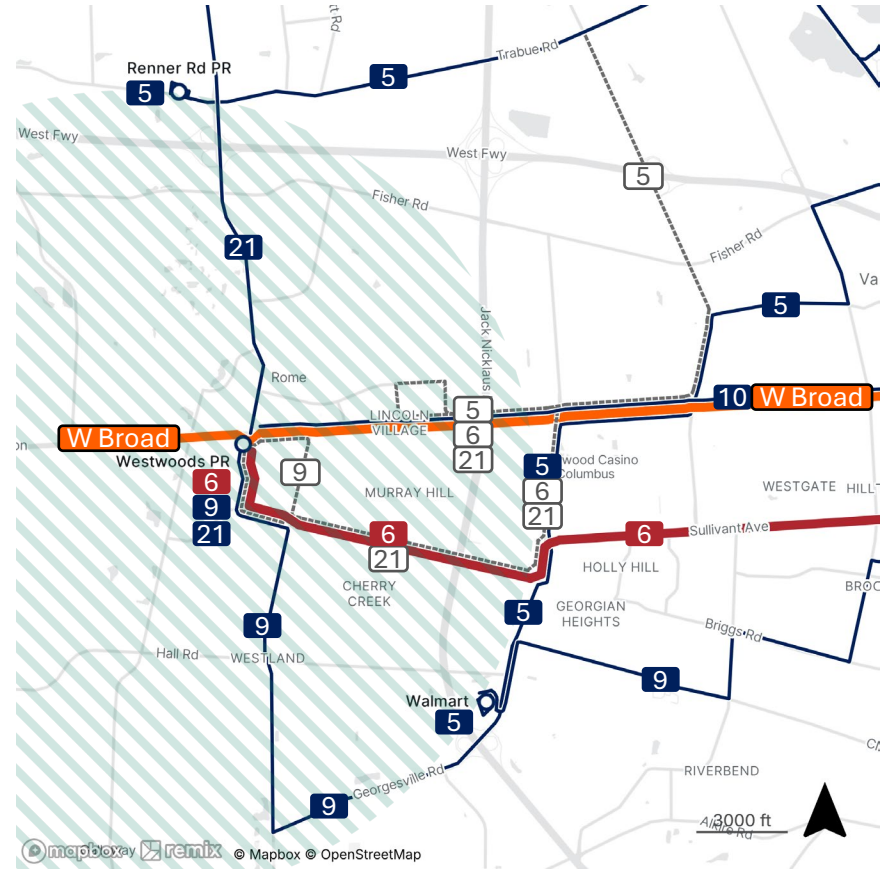
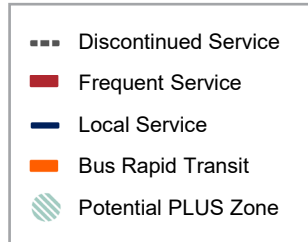
- **Rebalances low-performing, peak-focused service hours** to expand choices and improve overall system performance
- **Transitions most rush-hour-only lines**, while retaining select peak services that continue to meet demand (Routes 43, 45, 51, 52 and 71)
- **Strengthens nearby all-day lines**, improving frequency and reliability for impacted riders
- **Partners with MORPC** to connect riders to vanpool and other commute alternatives where appropriate
- **Redirected resources enable more frequent, reliable and impactful service** for a greater number of riders across the system



Proposed Changes: West

Service Reallocations

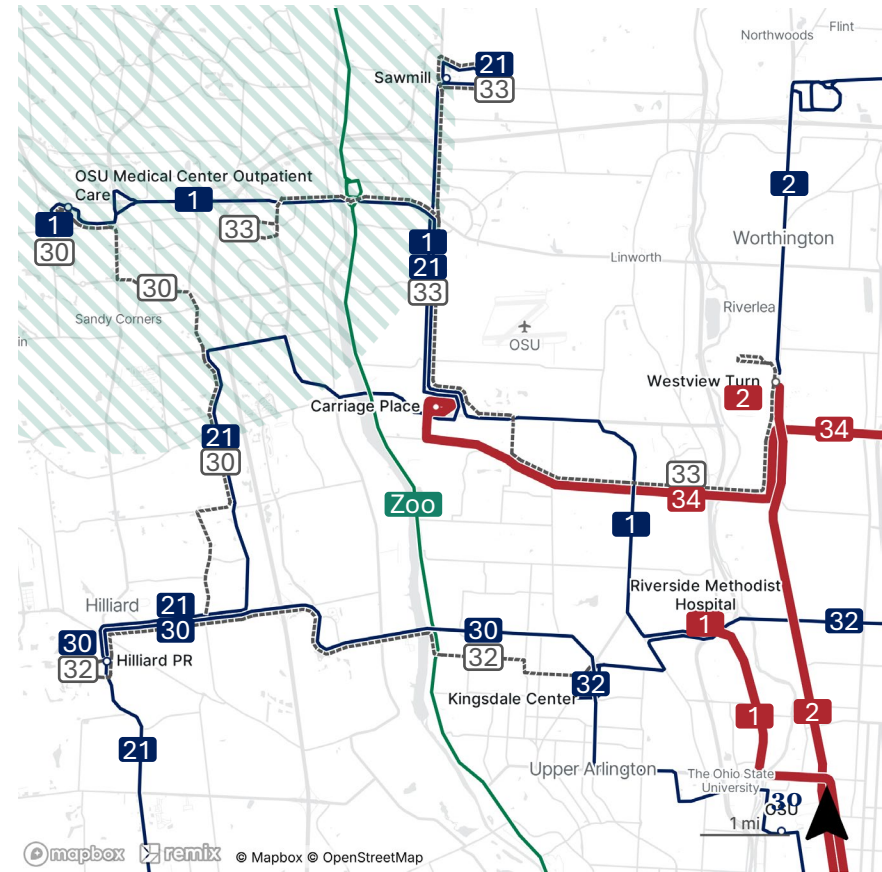
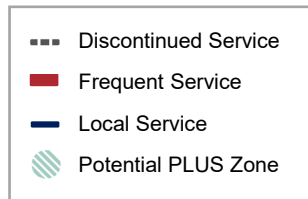
- **Streamline Lines 6 and 21** and terminate at Westwoods Park & Ride
- **Extend Line 5** to serve the Georgesville Walmart and Franklin County Corrections Center
- **Discontinue Rush Hour Line 71**
- **Potential Prairie Township COTA/Plus zone**



Proposed Changes: Northwest

Service Reallocations

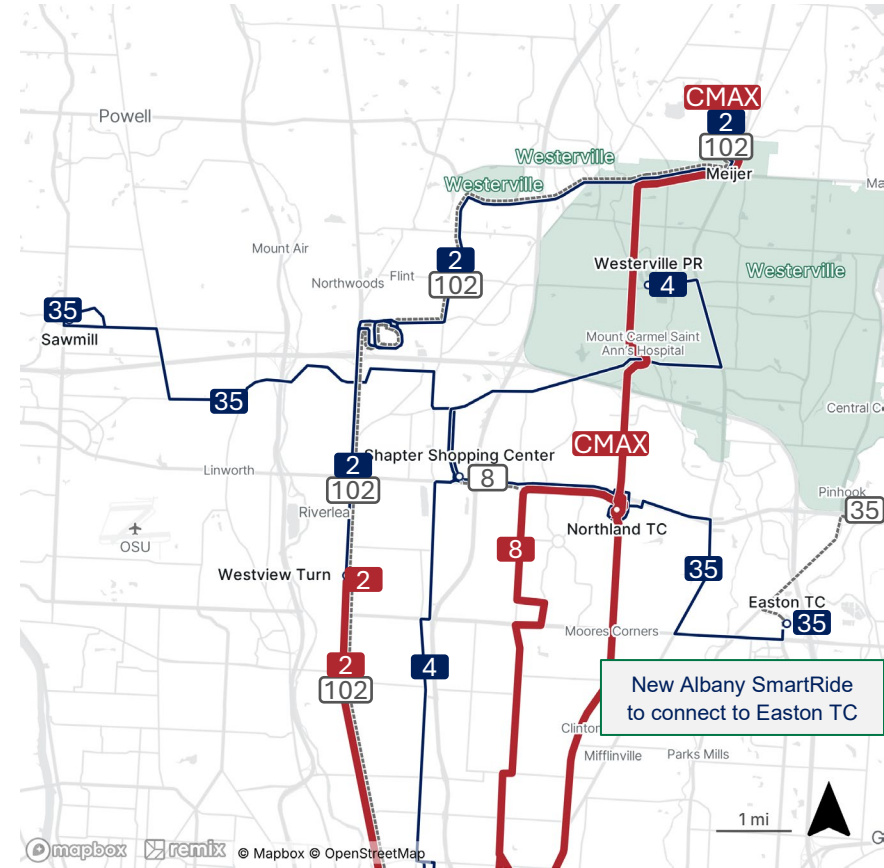
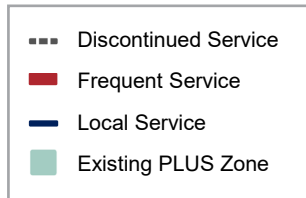
- **Replace Line 33** with Lines 1, 21 and 34
- **Refine the new Line 30** and adjust other routes
 - Reroute from Dublin to Hilliard and extend from OSU to Downtown
 - Line 1 connects OSU to OSU Dublin Outpatient Clinic
 - Line 21 serves Britton Parkway and crosstown connection
- **Discontinue Routes 72, 73, 74;** operate Zoo Bus year-round
- **Potential Dublin COTA//Plus zone**



Proposed Changes: North

Service Reallocations

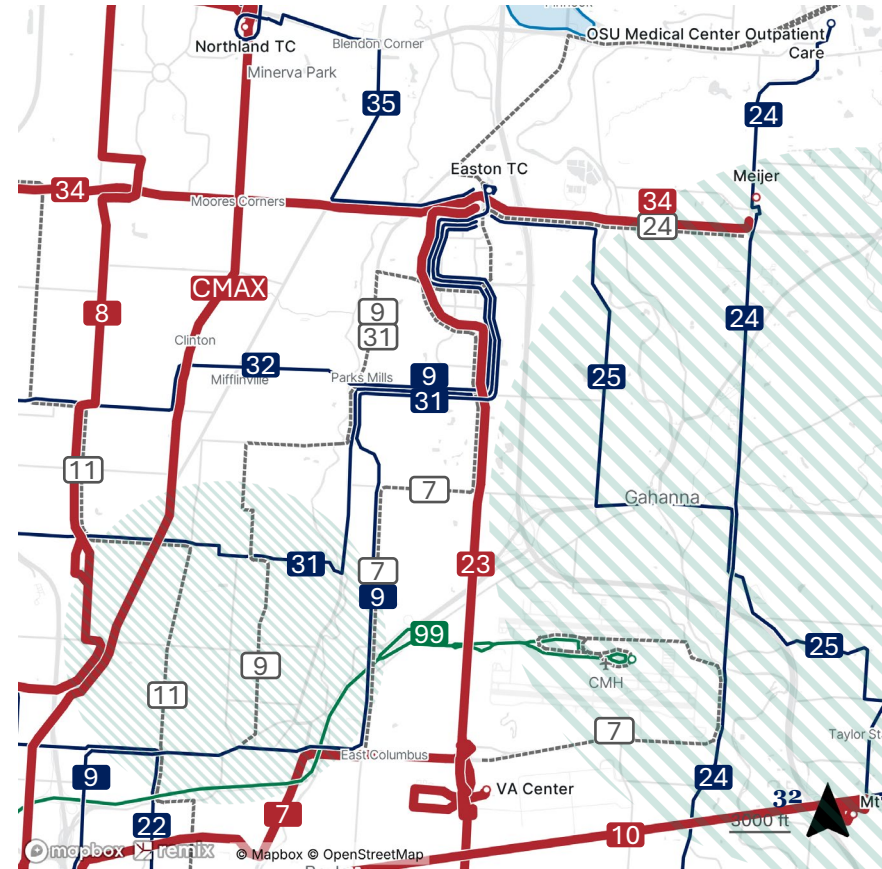
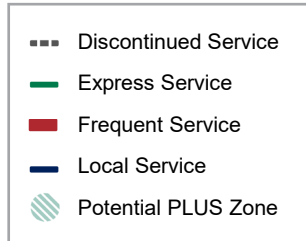
- **Extend Line 2** to Westerville, replace Line 102
- **Expand Line 4** to Westerville P&R
- **Reroute Line 35** to no longer serve New Albany; extend to Shapter & Wilson Bridge Rd.
- **Extend CMAX** from Ohio Health to Northgate Plaza
- **Reroute Line 8** from Boardwalk & Shapter to Northland Transit Center
- **Discontinue Routes 41**
- **Realign Routes 42 and 43**
- **New Albany SmartRide to connect at Easton Transit Center**



Proposed Changes: Northeast

Service Reallocations

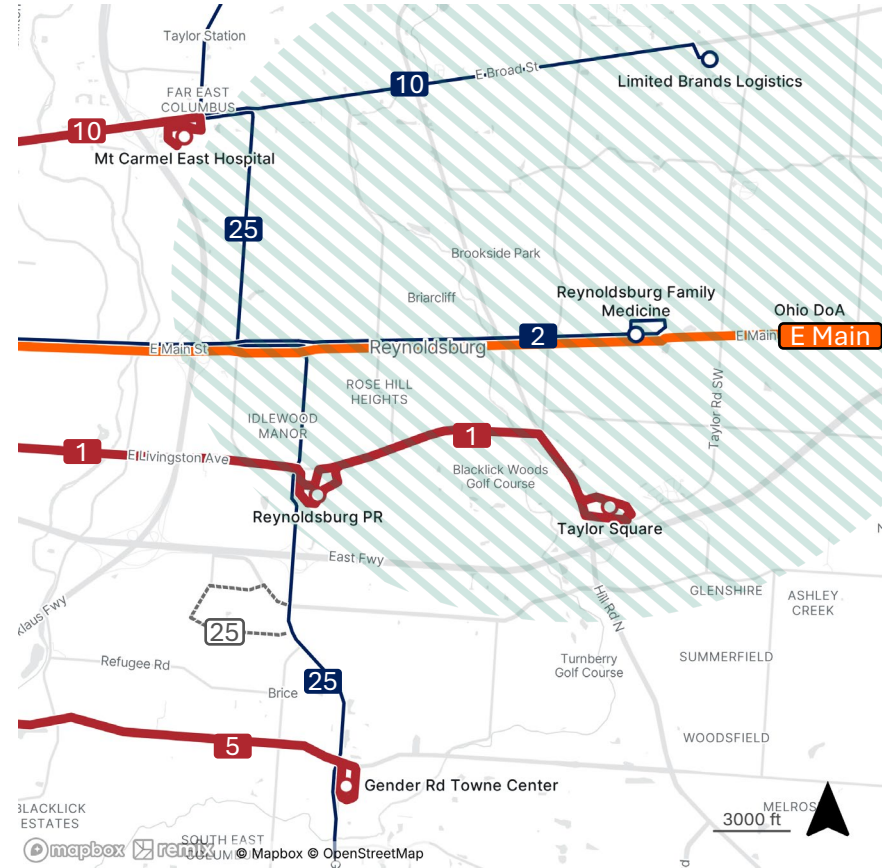
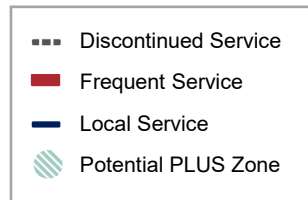
- **Provide frequent Line 7 service** to Africentric Early College and VA Clinic and no longer serve CMH or Easton
 - Line 99 will connect CMH, Downtown, and OSU
 - Line 9 will replace Line 7 on Cassady Ave.
- **Replace Line 11 and lost segment of Line 9** with the North Central COTA/Plus Zone
- **Extend Line 24** from Easton to Hamilton Quarter
- **Combine Line 45 and 46.** All trips will serve both Gahanna and New Albany Park & Rides.



Proposed Changes: East

Service Reallocations

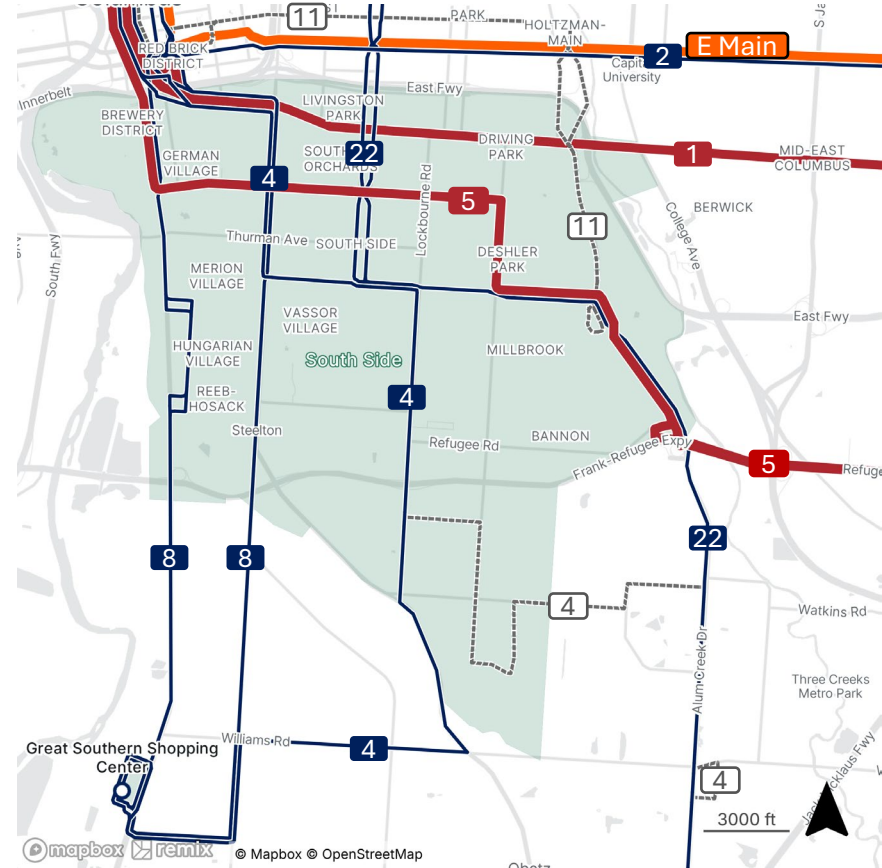
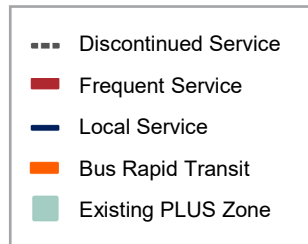
- **Extend Line 1** from the Reynoldsburg P&R to Taylor Square
- **Streamline Line 25** on Gender Rd.
- **Potential Reynoldsburg COTA//Plus zone**



Proposed Changes: South

Service Reallocations

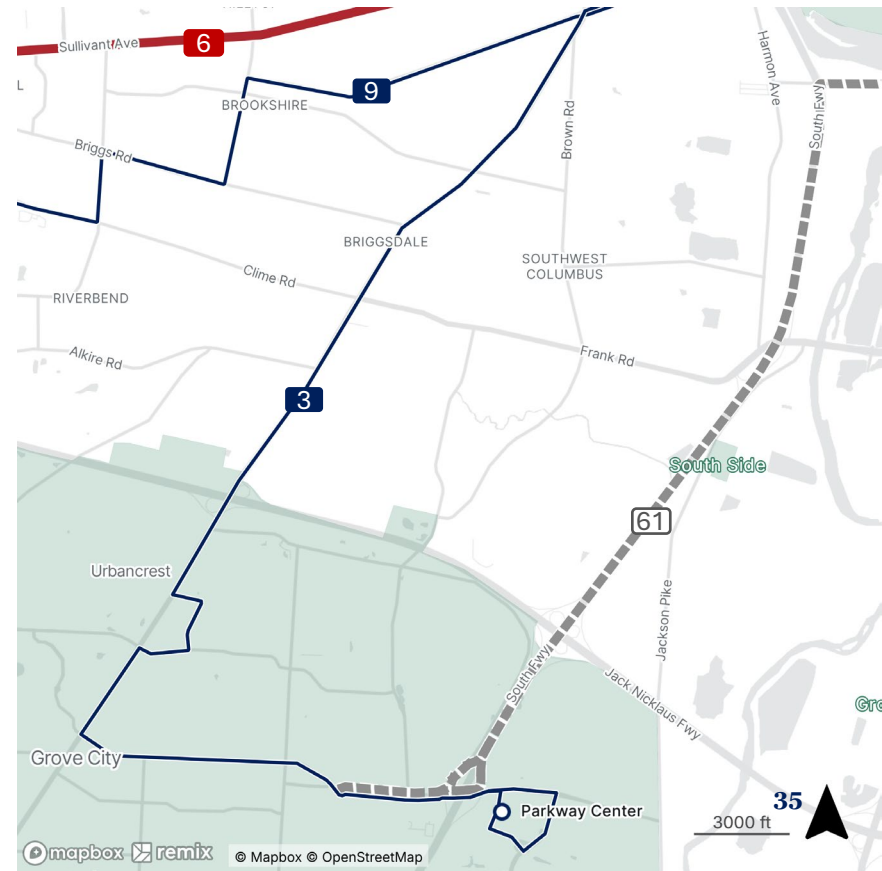
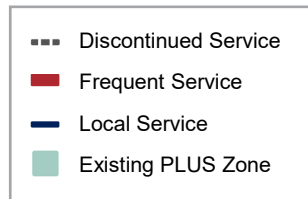
- **Reroute Line 4** from Alum Creek Dr. to Great Southern Shopping Center
- **Discontinue Line 11** due to route duplication
- **Implement BRT** on East Main St.



Proposed Changes: Southwest

Service Reallocations

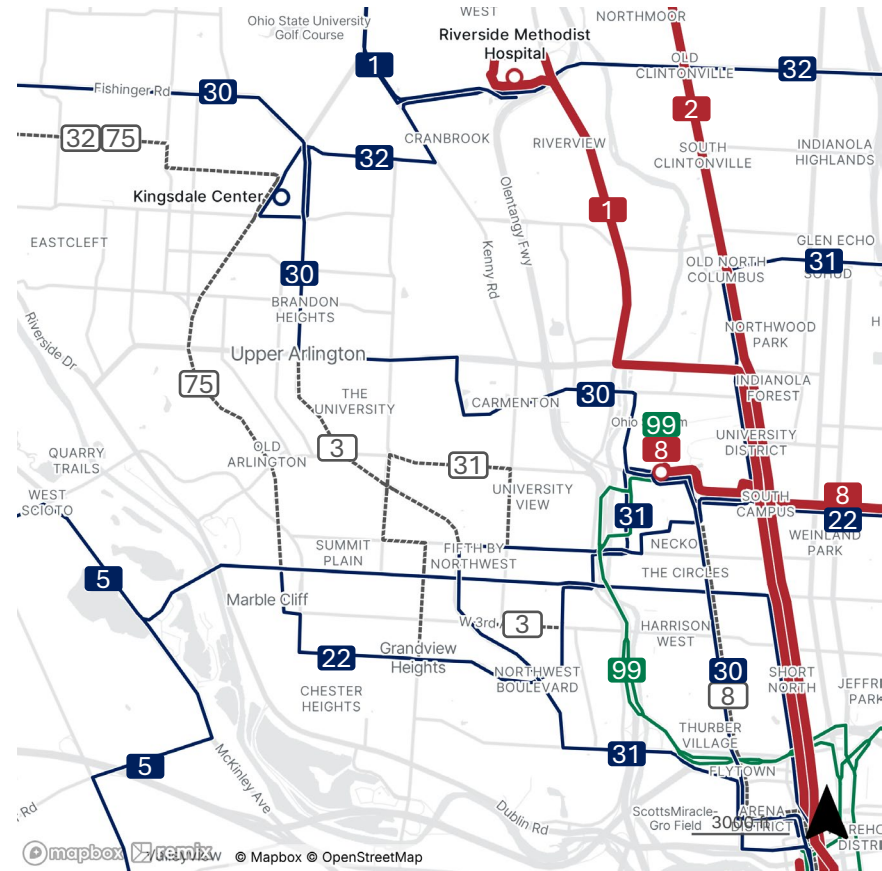
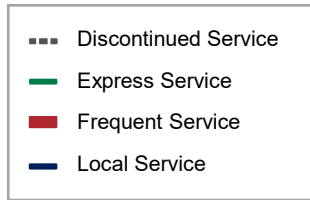
- Discontinue Line 61



Proposed Changes: OSU – GH – UA

Service Reallocations

- Replace Line 75 with Line 22 on First Ave.
- Connect Hilliard, Upper Arlington, and OSU to Downtown with Line 30 via Neil Ave, replacing Routes 3 and 8
- Directly serve OSU campus with Lines 8 & 22
- Streamline Line 31 and connect Grandview Yard, OSU, and downtown directly
- Add Line 99 to provide connection to Downtown and John Glenn International Airport

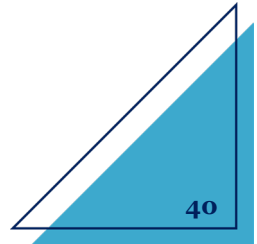


Key Benefits

Summary of Benefits

- **Delivers more frequent, reliable and useful transit service for more riders**, particularly during evenings and weekends
- **Rebalances resources away from underperforming, peak-only services** to strengthen all-day and all-week mobility
- **Maintains access in areas where service is streamlined**, through nearby routes, improved frequency or COTA//Plus options
- **Expands equity and opportunity** by increasing access to jobs, education, healthcare and essential destinations
- **Improves system reliability and operational efficiency**, supporting on-time performance and rider confidence
- **Prepares COTA for major initiatives**, including BRT, 24-hour service and LinkUS-funded investments
- **Uses public resources responsibly**, aligning service growth with workforce, fleet and fiscal capacity

Next Steps



Next Steps

- Feedback from today, other meetings, and online will be consolidated and reviewed
- Project team will make every attempt to address all feedback
- Updates to the network will occur
- Final proposed network (with engagement report) will be presented to COTA's Board of Trustees to be considered for adoption in July 2026
- Implementation will begin in 2027

How to Provide Feedback

Breakout Stations

- **Station 1:** Introduction and Overview (2 exhibits)
- **Stations 2–5:** Zoomed-in views of COTA's service area, by quadrants
 - **Station 2:** Northwest – Dublin, Hilliard, Worthington
 - **Station 3:** Northeast – New Albany, Westerville, Gahanna, Easton
 - **Station 4:** Southeast – Reynoldsburg, Groveport, Canal Winchester, Obetz
 - **Station 5:** Southwest – Franklinton, Upper Arlington, Hilltop, Grove City, Grandview Heights, OSU
- **Station 6:** Feedback and Related Initiatives
 - Comments accepted through May 15

Instructions

- Review proposals at each station
- Talk to our project team
- Give us feedback!
 - What works about these proposals?
 - What doesn't work?
 - What would you like to see?

Do a Deep Dive Online!



Thank you

April 21, 2026

COTA | SHORT RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2027-2031