

## Public Transportation Policy Brief

### FUNDING Priorities

- Support the extension of COVID-19 Pandemic relief funding. Recovery from the economic hardships will continue for many years to come.
- In 2000, the state of Ohio contributed \$43.6 million in general revenue funds (GRF) to be distributed statewide to the 61 transit systems in Ohio. Currently, the GRF allocation is \$7.3 million.
- Current transit funding per capita: Pennsylvania \$128.83, Michigan \$26.78, and Ohio \$0.63. Ohio needs an increase in GRF for public transit.
- Support efforts to fund and operate a truly regional, seamless public transit system to serve all the greater Toledo metropolitan area including all of Lucas County. Provide cost-effective access to surrounding counties and connections to and between major cities in the region.

### FEDERAL Priorities

- Retain the federal Mass Transit Account (MTA) of the Highway Trust Fund and increase its revenues.
- Incentivize cleaner, greener fleets and fund the replacement of existing diesel buses with environmentally sustainable, alternatively fueled vehicles.
- Retain the transit commuter tax benefit at the same level as the parking tax benefit.
- Retain the alternative fuels tax credit.
- The Federal Transit Authority (FTA) should expedite the current federal grant approval process to speed project delivery and reduce costs of projects. This would include exempting routine activities (i.e., bus replacement, preventive maintenance and equipment) from the regional office approval process.

### STATE Priorities

- Support the newly developed statewide long range plan, Access Ohio 2045.
- Encourage ODOT to update the 2015 ODOT Ohio Statewide Transit Needs Study.
- Double the General Revenue Fund contribution to ODOT Transit Funding.
- Increase ODOT budget to fund half the 20% local match required for Transit Capital Projects. This commitment will ensure that critical capital projects are completed, and federal funds available are being spent in Ohio.
- Expand the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, Medicaid, and other funding sources for on-demand rides to address the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes.
- Support the continuation of state funding programs to assist with capital and operational costs.

### LOCAL Priorities

- Support the initiative for a county-wide public transit system.
- Encourage the local transit agency to consider county-wide paratransit service by contracting and working with other providers.
- Support implementation of locally developed Coordinated Public Transportation and Human Service Transportation plans in Lucas and Wood counties to coordinate transportation services between counties and among all providers—public, private, and non-profit.
- Extend hours of service, strengthen regional connections, and offer faster, more direct routes.
- Improve productivity in service delivery by implementing one-call/one-click information for users.
- Continue adding mechanisms to coordinate under/unserved areas in Wood County.
- Identify more public transportation options to the local airports.

### REGIONAL Viewpoint

- Mobility should be available to all Ohioans regardless of ability, age, economic status, or federally protected class. Successful regions are characterized by a full range of safe, reliable, accessible, and reasonably priced transit services. Transit services link employees to their places of employment and centers of commerce. Transit connects people to healthy food options, and to medical, educational, religious, and recreational activities. Transit services require a viable, regional solution, without which our region will be left behind.