



Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Minutes

Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 9:30 AM

COTA - WG Porter Boardroom, 33 N High St, Columbus OH

1. Call to Order

Trustee Stephen Sayre called the May 5, 2026 Strategic and Operational Planning Committee meeting to order at 9:30 am.

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present

Mallory Donaldson, Trustee
Stephen Sayre, Trustee

Board Member Excused

Trudy Bartley, Chair

3. Approval of Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Minutes

A. March 3, 2026 Strategic and Operational Planning Committee Minutes

Trustee Mallory Donaldson moved to approve the March 3, 2026 Strategic and Operational Planning Committee meeting minutes, seconded by Trustee Stephen Sayre. Motion carried.

4. New Business

A. COTA 360 Scorecard Q1 Report - Sophia Mohr, COTA Chief Innovation Technology Officer and COTA Leadership Team

COTA Chief Innovation Technology Officer Sophia Mohr introduced the COTA 360 Scorecard Q1 Report, with the Leadership Team providing a first-quarter 2026 performance review of the COTA's progress against its 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, organized around four prioritized success outcomes: Customer Experience, Employee Engagement, Community Value, and Fiscal Responsibility. The presentation outlined goals, key performance indicators, and current results, showing that fixed-route on-time performance exceeded the 2026 goal at 82.69% while service reliability declined below target due to winter weather and vehicle system issues. Cost per service hour across all modes came in below budget, reflecting strong fiscal control despite weather-driven service disruptions. Several metrics, including Net Promoter Score, employee engagement, and community value, are pending later-year surveys to establish baselines or measure progress.

B. LinkUS Update - COTA LinkUS Team

The COTA LinkUS Team provided staffing updates within the Capital Delivery team; detailed status, risks, and next steps for the West Broad, East Main, and Northwest Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects. For West Broad, there's been ongoing engagement with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under the Capital Investment Grant program, including responses to cost and schedule questions, completion of traffic coordination modeling, and the need to finalize multiple critical agreements with the City of Columbus and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) before advancing to a Small Starts grant agreement. The East Main BRT update highlighted advancement through environmental review (with NEPA completion targeted for fall 2026), completion of 60 percent design, preliminary right-of-way planning, expanded traffic studies, and planned corridor-wide public engagement, while preparing for future FTA risk readiness. The Northwest BRT focus has been on procurement and readiness, with progress on selecting a design firm, preparation of a formal FTA rating request, and working to submit detailed project documentation required to achieve a qualifying rating in order to advance with the Capital Investment Grant program.

The team outlined the Transit-Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) program, noting that eight projects are expected to start construction in 2026, and 27 projects are in the design stage. The proposed 2027-2031 Capital Improvements Program includes 24 new projects; public comment period closes May 22. It was also shared that COTA and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) are working to establish an advance fund for smaller jurisdictions.

Finally, it was reported that the 2027–2031 Short-Range Transit Plan public engagement work is wrapping up, and staff will analyze feedback to refine and prioritize recommendations. An overview of the proposed COTA transit enhancements was provided: it proposes up to a 30 percent service increase over five years, expanded frequent service, longer operating hours, and potential new COTA//Plus zones.

C. LinkUS Public Engagement Update – Jeff Pullin, COTA Public and Media Relations Director

COTA Public and Media Relations Director Jeff Pullin presented the LinkUS Public Engagement update, outlining efforts to improve transparency, communication, and community involvement as the LinkUS program moves from planning into active implementation. Mr. Pullin described the development of a public-facing LinkUS dashboard to provide accountability and clear progress tracking, including its intended purpose, audience, phased rollout, and near-term milestones. The presentation also detailed a refresh of the LinkUS website to transform it into a real-time information hub centered on construction impacts, project updates, accessibility, and two-way engagement. Ongoing and upcoming public engagement activities were highlighted,

including corridor-specific outreach, public meetings (10 Transit-Oriented Development and six Short-Range Transit Plan meetings), partnerships with community organizations, and presence at local events, emphasizing COTA's commitment to consistent messaging, equitable engagement, and building public trust across LinkUS corridors.

D. Resolution 2026-XX Approving Ratings Request Submittal and Reasonable Financial Plan for the Northwest Corridor Bus Rapid Transit

COTA LinkUS Quality Management Director Zach Sunderland presented the Capital Delivery division's resolution, providing the background and noting this is the next step for the NW Corridor BRT. The resolution was recommended for the regular agenda.

E. Resolution 2026-XX Authorizing the Sale of Dublin Park and Ride

COTA Chief Financial Officer Earl Jackson presented the Sale of Dublin Park and Ride resolution and noted that after the sale, a phased relocation plan will be put in motion, which will minimize service disruption. The resolution was recommended for the regular agenda.

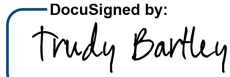
5. Other Business

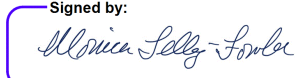
No other business was brought before the Committee.

6. Adjournment

Trustee Donaldson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Trustee Sayre. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am.

Adopted: _____ July 7, 2026 _____

Signed:  _____
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Chair, Strategic and Operational Planning Committee

Attest:  _____
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President/CEO