



Contact: Bernice Cage
Public Information Officer
Tel.: 614-233-4157
Cell Phone: 614-626-1117
Email: bcage@morpc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MORPC AUTHORIZES COTA TO CONTINUE AS DESIGNATED RECIPIENT OF URBAN TRANSIT FUNDS

(Columbus – December 11, 2009) The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), is authorizing the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) to file applications with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and to be the designated recipient of Section 5307 urban transit funds. Section 5307 federal transit funds have previously been apportioned to the urbanized areas of the country based on various criteria set forth in the Federal Register. Action by the governor of Ohio and COTA will also be necessary to complete the re-designation of COTA to receive these funds.

Sections 5307, Urbanized Area Formula Program funds, are awarded by FTA to urbanized areas for public transportation capital and operating assistance and for transportation-related planning. To increase public transportation ridership, Section 5307 promotes a vibrant public transportation environment by:

- Assisting in the planning, engineering, design, construction, evaluation and maintenance of public transportation projects, equipment and facilities;
- Facilitating cooperation between public transportation companies and private companies engaged in public transportation to encourage the planning and establishment of area wide public transportation systems needed for economical and desirable urban development;
- Encouraging mobility management, joint development practices and transit-oriented development;
- Providing financial assistance to States and local governments to help carry out national goals related to mobility for all, including elderly individuals, individuals with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged individuals;
- Investing in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement, overhaul and rebuilding of buses;
- Investing in crime prevention, public transportation safety, and security equipment.

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Working to Build a Better Region

**111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio 43215-5222
Phone (614) 228-2663 Fax (614) 621-2401
www.morpc.org**

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“Section 5307 funds are essential for COTA to provide effective public transit to central Ohio,” said COTA President/CEO Bill Lhota. “We appreciate that MORPC continues to authorize COTA as the designated recipient.”

“Under the leadership of Bill Lhota, COTA has demonstrated excellent management in providing essential mobility services to the Columbus area. MORPC is pleased to participate in the re-designation of COTA as the recipient of federal urban transit funds for our region,” stated Robert Lawler, MORPC Director of Transportation.

MORPC recommended COTA as the designated recipient during the December business meetings with final approval upon completion of the public involvement process.

For more information visit morpc.org. Comments can be sent to the attention of Mary Ann Frantz by letter, fax (614-621-2401), or e-mail (mfrantz@morpc.org) to arrive no later than December 31, 2009.

MORPC is a voluntary association of 47 local governments in central Ohio serving the region through planning, direct service, public policy information and innovative programming and intergovernmental coordinating services in the areas of transportation, land use, energy conservation, the environment and housing. MORPC is currently celebrating its 40th Anniversary and its efforts to build a better central Ohio region.