**Ohio celebrates transportation investment through Ohio Loves Transit Week**

***Local agencies will celebrate riders and how a $105 million statewide investment is improving job and mobility access through events, free rides***

COLUMBUS, OH… Ohio Loves Transit—that’s why state lawmakers invested $105 million in state transit system funding. Area agencies will be celebrating that investment and highlighting how transit is the strong economic engine of communities through the Ohio Public Transit Association’s (OPTA) Ohio Loves Transit Week from Feb. 10-14, 2020. During this week, participating local transit agencies will be highlighting how their systems are enhancing mobility for all around the state and spurring economic development through job access.

Ohio Loves Transit week will include activities with transit customers all week, peaking on Valentine’s Day, Friday, Feb. 14, with the third annual “Ohio Loves Transit Day” celebration. On that day, OPTA agencies from across the state—Columbus, to Lancaster, Akron to Cincinnati—will ask riders to share why they support public transit, and why our state and federal leaders should, too. Agencies will be offering promotions and/or free rides in conjunction with the celebration—with events varying by location.

Ohio’s public transportation systems are striving to meet the daily mobility needs of Ohio’s growing senior population, along with keeping up with the capital need to move workers, students, and those without access to their own vehicles. Public transportation in Ohio comes in many shapes and forms, from rail and streetcars, to buses, vans, and bikes.

Transit drives Ohio’s economy, with national statistics showing that every $1 invested in public transit generates $4 in economic return. Whether it’s getting to area shopping centers, local airports, libraries, parks, bike trails, or countless other leisure time destinations—Ohio transit can get you there.

Ohio’s transit systems also provide a vital link to thousands of people with disabilities, by providing rides to work, job training programs, medical appointments and adult day care facilities. With the “baby boomer” generation aging, the needs for these services has grown, and both urban and rural transit agencies alike are working to ensure all citizens have the access to the transportation services they need to remain an active part of their community.

OPTA is the primary advocate for public transportation in Ohio. Now nearly 400 members strong from 61 transit agencies across the state, the association provides leadership, resources, training, support, technical assistance, media outreach, public engagement, and governmental relations services to public and private transit agencies.

 visit the OPTA website at www.ohioneedstransit.org.